Row for Glory

Crinoline Cargo

The Way We Ate

The Beaver

CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

December 2007 | January 2008

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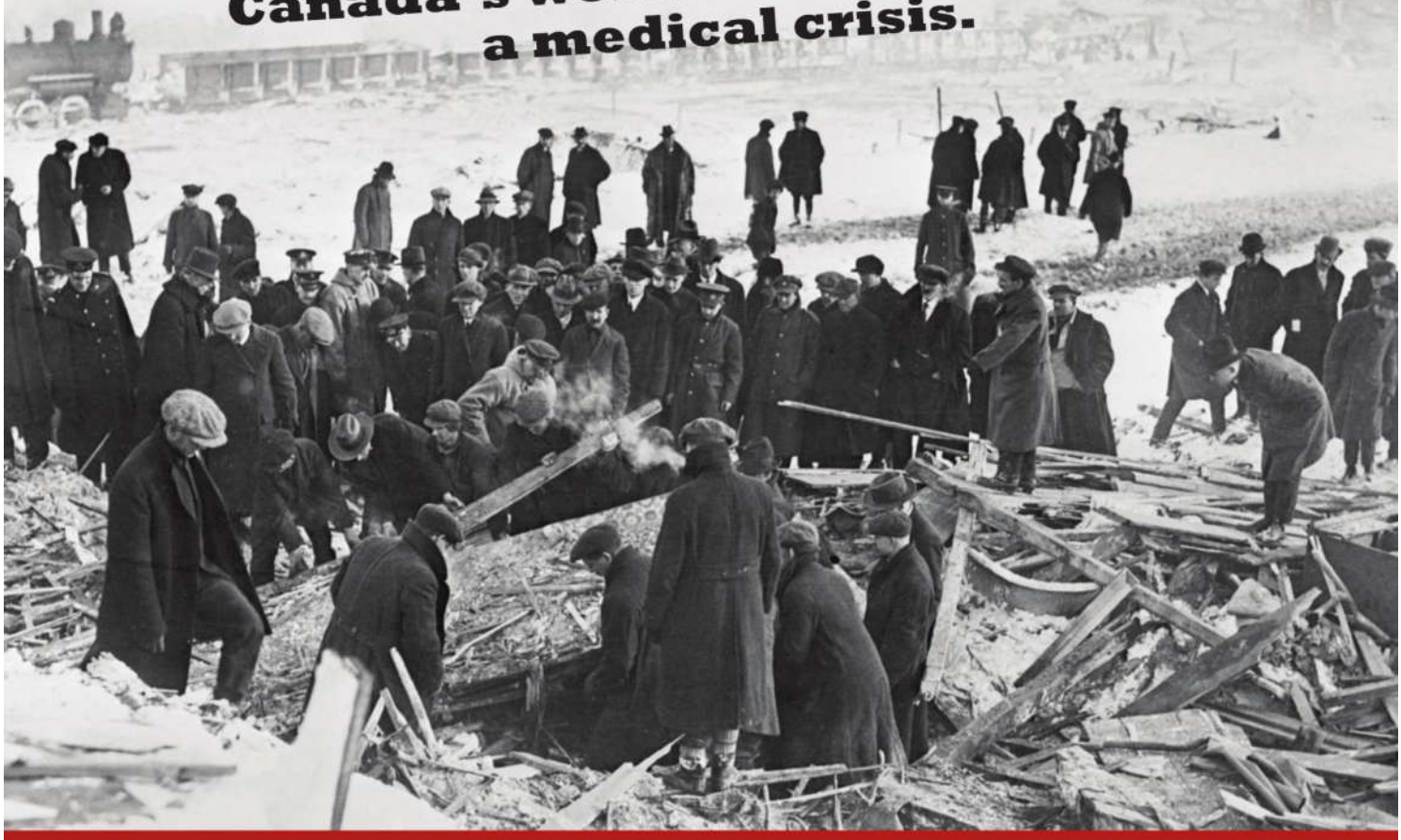

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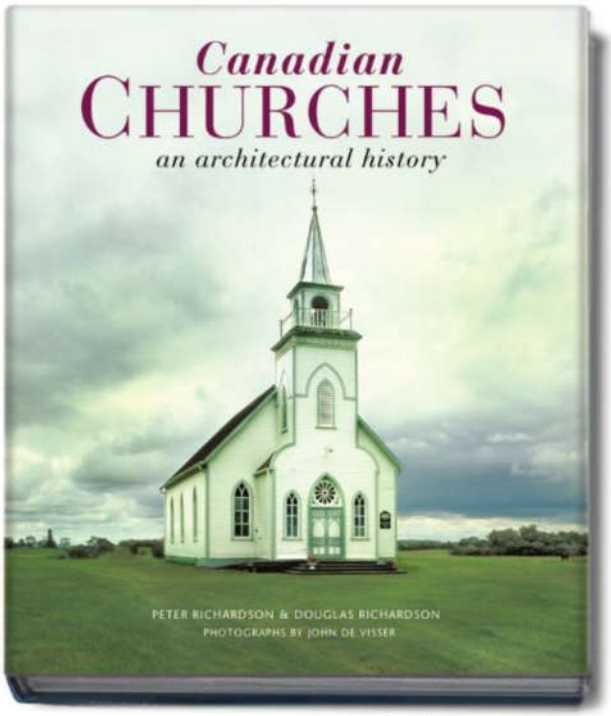

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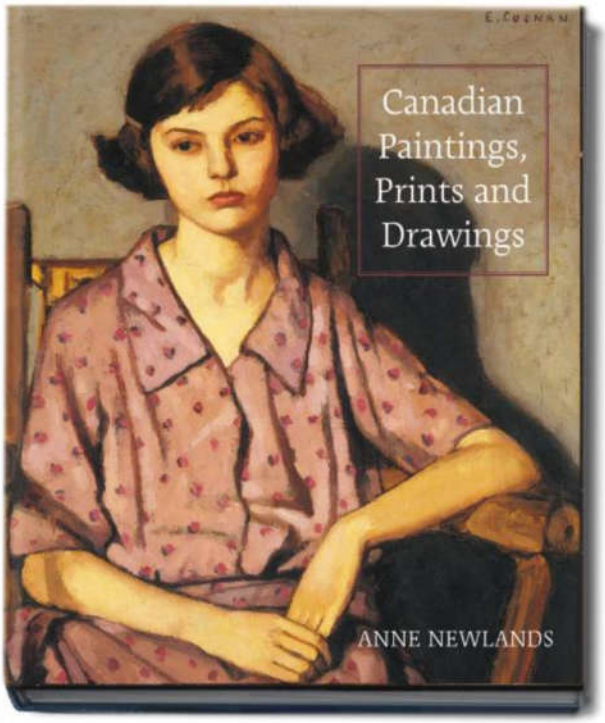

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Canada

Food for thought

The forests were vast, the work ahead daunting. Yet, from the earliest days, the newcomers from Europe could see Canada's potential. "It will be a great grain- and grass-producing country," Samuel de Champlain predicted in 1608 as he surveyed the land surrounding what would one day become Quebec City.

It's difficult, perhaps impossible, for us today to comprehend the toil required in those early days to transform the landscape from rough wilderness to pastoral farmland.

No combines, no tractors, no chainsaws; just men with axes, hewing and clearing the land one tree at a time. Ploughs were a luxury; fields of turned soil were cleared of stones by blistered and calloused hands. Livestock were a precious commodity, guarded and nurtured without the aid of modern veterinary medicines or genetic engineering. Often, one's skill at the hunt meant the difference between having meat for the table, and going without.

THOMAS RICKE

Those earliest settlers learned from the First Nations peoples who preceded them, adopting new crops and techniques of farming from the Iroquois, Huron and others in the New World. Women and children worked long hours, pulling weeds, gathering vegetables, pickling preserves, and salting meat. A bumper harvest meant full bellies and hope for the long winter ahead. A failed crop often led to malnutrition, sickness, or even death by starvation.

With such struggle inherent in the harvest, it's no wonder the earliest settlers imbued food, and the meals they shared, with such emotion.

In this issue, we explore four centuries of food in Canada. From New France through to early twentieth-century Alberta, writers and food historians Fiona Lucas, Dorothy Duncan, Cinda Chavich, Marie Nightingale, and Hélène-Andrée Bizier offer us a taste of the foodways of early Canadians.

Using fictional narratives, they also show us that food, to early Canadians, was more than just a matter of survival; it was a unifying force that binded communities.

In Nightingale's article, "Early Fusion in Pictou," a meal of cock-a-leekie soup and finnan haddie becomes an offering of friendship between Scottish settlers in Nova Scotia and their new German neighbours up the coast. Meanwhile, in Duncan's piece, "Food Fit For an Uprising," a covert meal at a Toronto inn is an occasion to plot against the hated Family Compact.

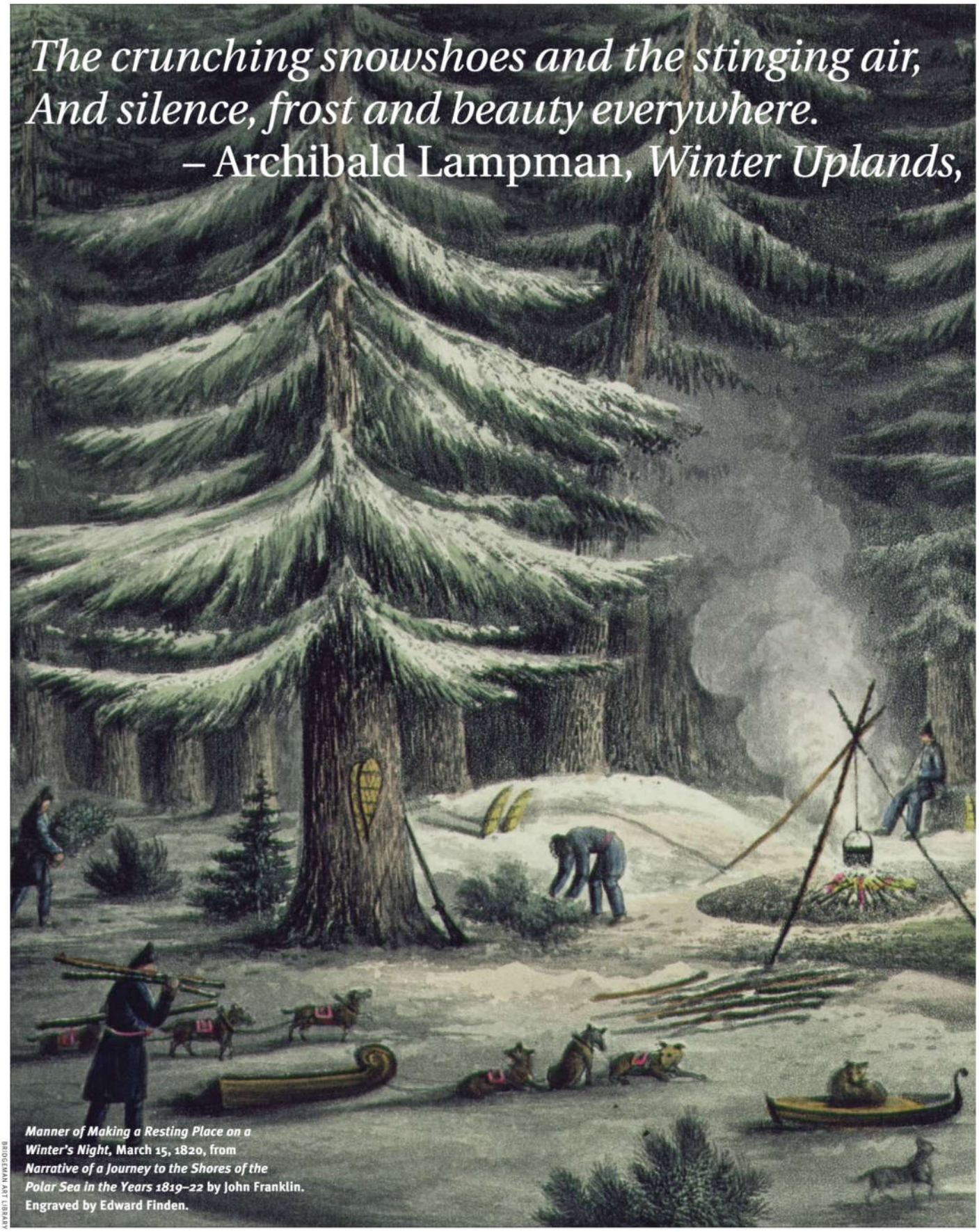
When it comes to food, much has changed in the past four hundred years — and yet, much remains the same. For most of us, the difference between feast and famine is a simple trip to the grocery store. Our ancestors would surely be amazed.

However, we, like our forebears, still see food as more than merely dishes to be eaten. Even in the twenty-first century, families, friendships and communities still grow stronger one meal at a time.

Mark Reid
Editor
editors@historysociety.ca

COVER: CORBIS/BETTMANN

The crunching snowshoes and the stinging air,
And silence, frost and beauty everywhere.
– Archibald Lampman, *Winter Uplands,*



Manner of Making a Resting Place on a Winter's Night, **March 15, 1820, from** ***Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1819–22*** **by John Franklin. Engraved by Edward Finden.**

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The Beaver

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HWY: 5.9L/100km

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Letters

Foggy football

The 1962 Grey Cup game between the Winnipeg Blue Bombers and Hamilton Tiger Cats ["The Fog Bowl," October/November 2007] was also notable because it was the first widespread telecast of a Canadian Football League game carried by an U.S. network (ABC). As a new student in the Yale University Graduate School in New Haven, Connecticut, I looked forward that year to educating my American fellow students on the merits of the Canadian game, and invited a group of eight-to-ten people to watch the contest on my second-hand, black-and-white television — which was somewhat snowy at the best of times. It was a disappointing exercise for me and, aside from the sight of a few shadowy figures near the beginning of the game, my guests remained uninformed about the tactics of three-down football. We did enjoy an afternoon of drinking Budweiser and it was certainly more pleasant than the November afternoon a year later, when we sat around contemplating the assassination of President John Kennedy.

WILLIAM J. WOLFE, PH.D. (YALE '66)
PARKSVILLE, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Fenians discovered

I thought I was well aware of my local history ... but I had never heard of the Fenian raids ["War at the Border," October/ November 2007]. So I drove ... to Eccles Hill ... to see the battlefield and the monument. I was not the only one ... walking the grounds. An elderly gentleman, with his two sisters, had come to show them this monument he had come across in the early 1950s. Until today, he was not entirely sure what it was all about. Thanks to your article, we had a very nice conversation on the subject.

YVES FOURNIER
ST-JEAN-SUR-RICHELIEU, QUÉBEC

Trestles treatment

In the October-November 2007 issue of *The Beaver*, I read about the incredible rebuilding of the fire-damaged Myra Canyon trestles. Since "it is such a special place," to quote Ken Campbell, why not have a full-blown article with before photos, during the rebuilding photos and the completed reconstruction project?

CLARE MINARCIK
BEAMSVILLE, ONTARIO

Military mix-up

I found an error a few minutes ago while reading the sidebar, Heroism and History, in the [October/November 2007] issue. The writer states that at least thirteen soldiers have been decorated for heroism in Afghanistan. You cite them as members of the PPCLI (Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry), a great regiment, and the Royal Regiment of Canada. Absolutely not. Completely inaccurate. The Royal Regiment of Canada is a militia unit based in Toronto. The guys in Afghanistan are The Royal Canadian Regiment, the senior infantry regiment of the Canadian army in the regular force.

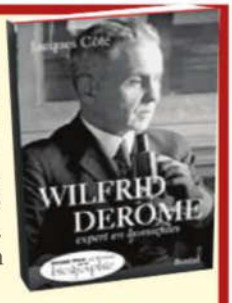
ROBERT S. BERRY RCAMC (RET'D)
HUNTSVILLE, ONTARIO

(Editor's note: Mr. Berry is correct regarding The Royal Canadian Regiment. Both the author and the editors regret the error.)

***The Beaver* welcomes readers' comments.** E-mail us at editors@historysociety.ca or write to *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0T6 Canada. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

ERRATUM

In "Rigorous Science" [February/March 2007], credit for much of source of the article was inadvertently left out during the editing process. Prior to the article being published, the author had informed editors at *The Beaver* that the article relied heavily on the book *Wilfrid Derome, expert en homicides*, by Jacques Côté (Les Éditions du Boréal, 2003), and had asked that this be properly acknowledged. *The Beaver* regrets the failure to cite Mr. Côté's book as the main source of the article and to include it in the bibliography that appeared at the end of the story.



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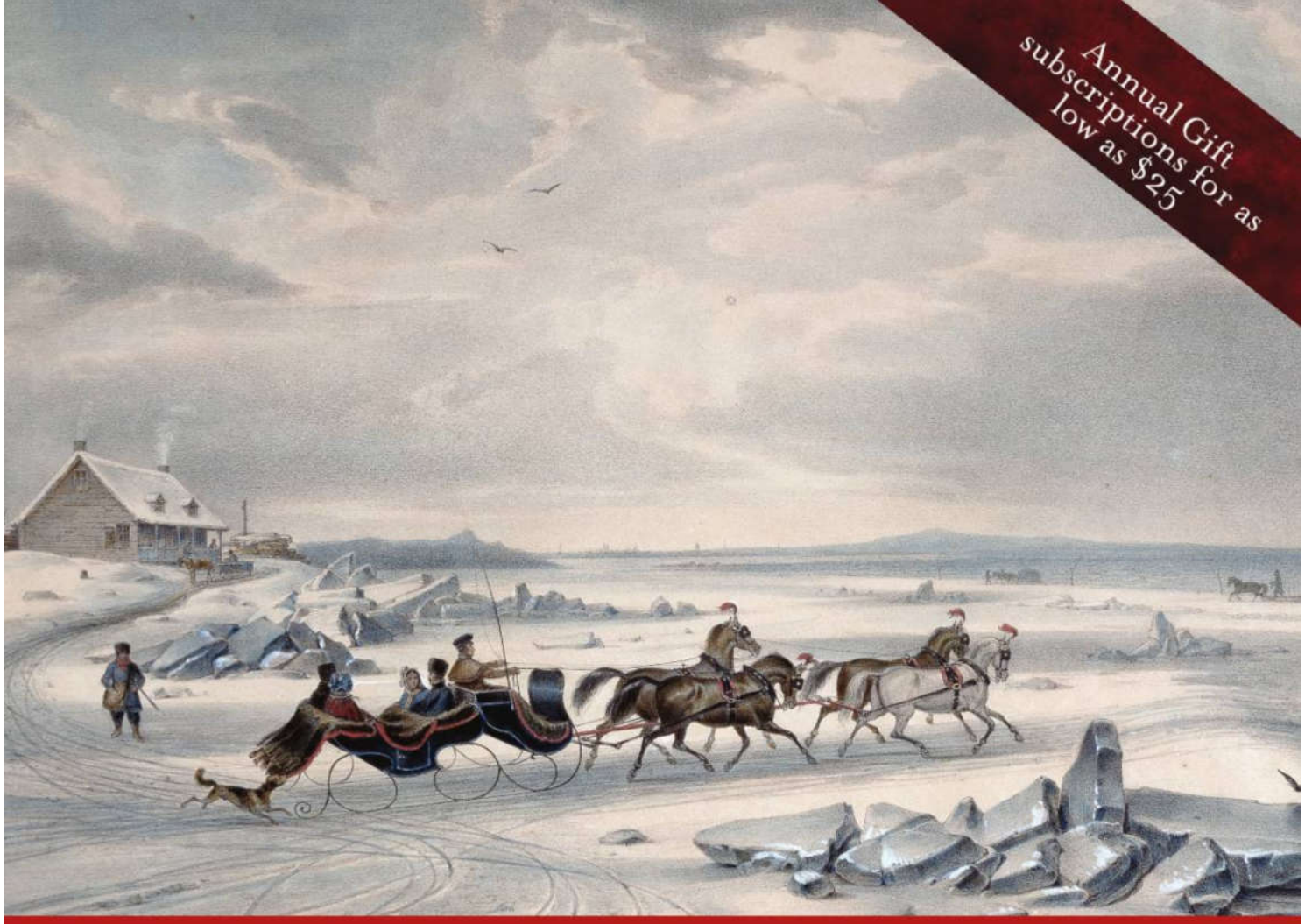

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Trailing the holiday gobbler

Celebrating Christmas with a feast of turkey is a relatively recent Canadian tradition, but its history dates back to early European explorers who brought the bird from the Americas to Europe. Some suggest that King Henry VIII was the first to consume turkey for Christmas around 1523. It was Edward VII, king from 1901 to 1910 and known for his hospitality, appetite, and lavish yuletide feasts, who made turkey fashionable, though the domesticated variety remained beyond most people's means.

Back in North America, practicality and availability wrote the menu. In *Canadian Christmas Book*, Caroline Carver quotes an 1855 article telling why goose long remained the bird of choice for the holidays: "Sixteen years ago … glorious goose fattened on the rice bed in our lake…. Turkeys were only to be met with on old cleared farms in those days, and beef was rarely seen."

Reports from the 1820s note that wild turkey was cheaper than barnyard fowl, and by 1840 wild turkeys had become the target of choice for beginning hunters. Plentiful, easily captured, and juicy, wild turkey became a staple that was eaten stewed, roasted, stuffed, or in sausages and pies.

Beginning in 1871, Joseph Tomalin, a British immigrant working as a poulterer (bird seller) in Toronto, made six Christmas trips to England to sell "Canadian wild turkeys" (the turkeys were actually raised domestically in Canada). Each time, he sold out within minutes — fifty turkeys per trip.

Then, in 1907, disease carried by domestic breeds of turkeys brought to Canada by English settlers combined with over-hunting and the loss of habitat to make the wild turkey extinct in Ontario.

By the 1940s, refrigeration had reduced food-poisoning concerns that plagued meals where fowl was served. The new American-bred Beltsville White turkey hit the market, lacking the bluish-tinged flesh of domesticated wild turkeys. Canadians flocked to the new variety, drawn by the festive appearance of the white meat dressed with red cranberries and the convenience of its smaller size.

The cultural link with the holidays, however, wound up hurting producers, as consumers reduced their consumption of turkey as a non-holiday staple.

Wild turkeys, meanwhile, eventually made a comeback after being reintroduced to areas of Ontario and other parts of Canada. But with strict rules governing the hunt, wild turkey is unlikely to return to the holiday table in large numbers.

— Pat Kerr

TAKE THE
DAY OFF
December 5
To commemorate the appearance in 1893 of Canada's first electric car, built in Toronto. Honk your hybrid's horn.

Currents

Our home & native ...

Pablum

The original breakfast of champions, Pablum was invented in 1930 by doctors Alan Brown, Theodore Drake, and Frederick Tisdall at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. The three pediatricians were concerned by the rate of infant mortality and set about producing the perfect food.

Combining cornmeal, oats, and wheat, plus wheat germ, brewer's yeast, bone meal, and alfalfa, the doctors made a nutritionally palatable blend for growing children. It contained vitamins A, B1, B2, D, and E, and was rich in essential minerals.

One challenge was to produce a cereal that did not require lengthy cooking. By drying the mixture on a red-hot revolving drum, they were able to produce a flaky powder.

Pablum, from the Latin *pabulum* (foodstuff), was found to be easily digestible and produced few allergies. With most of the test children exhibiting improved health, Tisdall sold the rights to manufacture the precooked cereal product to the Mead Johnson Company in Chicago, with the hospital receiving a royalty from each box sold. The brand name was later acquired by the H.J. Heinz Company.

THE HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN ARCHIVES, TORONTO

Pablum was heralded as a major nutritional breakthrough, helping to prevent childhood conditions such as rickets and malnutrition.

— Beverley Tallon

Norma Shephard

HAT MUSEUM

Living History

If the hat fits, share it

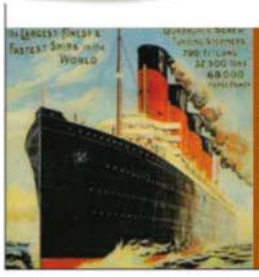
For years, Norma Shephard has been collecting hats she finds at flea markets and second-hand stores. In 1999 she turned her collection, which now boasts over twenty-five hundred pieces, into the Mobile Millinery Museum, a unique road show that travels the country raising funds for various charities, while spreading the history of hats, shoes, and bridal gowns through stories, legends, and myths.

The English word *milliner* dates back to sixteenth-century Milan, Italy, which was renowned as a supplier of fancy goods such as straw hats, gloves, and jewellery. Over the following centuries, milliners continued to assist in the selection of the accessories and trimmings that completed an outfit, but the word eventually came to be reserved for those who made or sold women's hats.

Hats were important status symbols in Europe. It's believed that King Charles I of England wore a Canadian beaver hat at his beheading on a cold winter day in January of 1649.

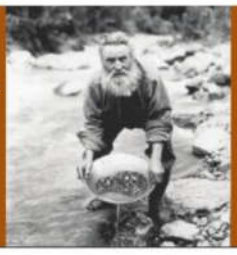
The demand in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for fur hats was one of the reasons behind the fur trade's expansion in North America.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, hats became a status symbol among society women. They remained so until the Second World War, when sup-



December 15

To honour the 1925 agreement between Canada and Britain that reduced transportation rates for immigrants. Call the old country.



December 28

To mark the 1857 edict declaring Crown possession of all gold found along B.C.'s Fraser and Thompson rivers. Stake your claim.

plies dwindled and many women no longer had the time or resources to remain fashionable.

By the 1960s, hats had fallen out of fashion, but a revival in the 1990s saw the re-emergence of milliners and interest in hats.

Shephard says hats from the 1950s — the haute couture hats — garner the most attention at her shows. Her oldest piece, however, is an early nineteenth-century straw Theodore bonnet that she found by pure luck digging around at a vintage sale.

She acquired most of her collection through sheer perseverance, by shuffling through thrift stores and flea markets for unique finds. Over the years, Shephard has also received donations of hats from people who have heard of and enjoy the museum.

Her museum tours have raised funds for a variety of charitable causes, including cancer research and diagnostic equipment, homeless teens in rural Ontario, and a women's and children's shelter in Israel.

Shephard is writing her third book on vintage and collectible hats and attire. The museum presents a variety of shows featuring different pieces of apparel from times past. Temporary exhibits are set up in museums and other historical locations. For instance, she staged a wedding exhibit featuring vintage wedding dresses at Toronto's Casa Loma a few years back. The "Shoe and Tell" exhibit, as would be imagined, focuses on traditional footwear.

Among the museum's various presentations, the retrospective millinery fashion show is the most popular. The interactive hour-long show features hats from the Victorian era.

For more information on the Mobile Millinery Museum, visit hatmuseum.ca.

— Matthew Wright

Grand curling club getting facelift

The once stately Granite Curling Club in central Winnipeg has turned decidedly frumpy over the decades, with its midriff sagging and its exterior faded and peeling. But the home of the oldest curling club in Western Canada, and one of the most recognized in the world, is getting a new lease on life.

"We hope the Granite is around for many years to come," says general manager Laurie Martens, who has been behind the venerable club's gradual restoration. "It's just too important a building to let die. There's just so much history here."

The Tudor-styled Granite is by some considered curling's version of Scotland's famed St. Andrews course, the mother club of golf. The Granite was the first "grand" curling club built in the West, and in 1953 became one of the first in the country to install artificial ice.

One of its early presidents, Mark Fortune, went down with the Titanic in 1912. Most notably, the Granite has produced some of the most influential builders and players in the sport, including three-time Canadian and two-time world champion Don Duguid.

Long neglected, the building is being spruced up thanks to funding from the city of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba, as well the club's own fundraising efforts. In the start of what Martens and the Granite's membership hope is a major turnaround, it has been given a new kitchen, a new roof, and new lighting over the nine-sheet curling surface, plus a general deep cleaning.

That curling's grand dame is still around is something of a miracle in itself. The Granite's current home, opened in 1913, has survived the great flood of 1950, serious bank erosion that threatened to topple the building into the Assiniboine River, and several financial problems.

Several daunting problems remain. The building needs major work to its structure and outer walls, and the eroding riverbank — shored up by the city in the late 1980s — is a continuing threat.

The Granite is an example of the dilemma faced in cities across the country: what to do with old, fading buildings that have rich, historic value but may be too costly to restore to their previous splendour.

Heritage Winnipeg, a non-profit, charitable organization that promotes the restoration and preservation of the city's built environment, says Winnipeg has close to 1,000 historic buildings that are worth keeping, including the Granite.

For the Granite, demolition is simply out of the question, says Martens. "With the amount of history behind this place, there would be an outrage," she says.

— Dave Komosky

January 1

To note one hundred and fifty years since the dollar became the official monetary unit of the then Province of Canada. Take it to the bank.

January 8

To remember the 1894 Quebec legislation limiting hours worked and increasing workplace safety. Count your fingers and toes.

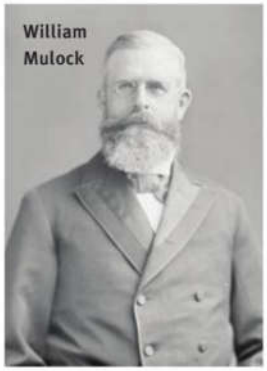
Currents

Moment

CANADA POST CORPORATION, 1898

December 25, 1898: Imperial Penny Postage begins

The most spectacular postage stamp Canada issued in the nineteenth century has a map of the world with the oceans in blue and the British Empire standing out sharply in vivid red. The stamp inaugurated Imperial Penny Postage (an English penny was roughly equal to two Canadian cents) at Christmas 1898, following a campaign by Canadian Postmaster General William Mulock. Not only were the stamp's design and the use of more than one colour groundbreaking for Canada, but, through circumstances that remain unclear, the "Canadian Map Stamp" — as it is known to collectors — has a claim to being the world's first Christmas stamp.


William Mulock

The Mercator projection made the British Empire look even bigger than it was, with Canada, India, Australia, and South Africa appearing huge, and splashes of red scattered across British possessions in the interior of Africa and dotted across the islands of the Pacific. The stamp was designed under the direction of Mulock (later Sir William Mulock), who served as postmaster general from 1896 to 1905. There was good reason for his input and his pride: He had almost single-handedly persuaded the Empire to accept Imperial Penny Postage.

According to Arthur A. Pearson, a British civil servant who was present at the 1898 Imperial Postal Conference, it was understood in advance that delegates would probably agree upon a new lower tariff for imperial postage — likely twopence throughout the Empire. It was thus to be called Imperial Twopenny Post, and the British Post Office had already accepted the idea. But at the very first meeting, Mulock took everyone aback by proposing, on behalf of Canada, Imperial Penny Post. No other delegate supported the idea, but Joseph Chamberlain, the dynamic British colonial secretary, liked it very much.

In October 1930, Pearson, by then retired, took the opportunity of Canadian Prime Minister R.B. Bennett's visit to London to write to him about what happened next. The *Bennett Papers* at the University of New Brunswick tell that Chamberlain asked Pearson to visit Mulock in private and to tell him not to be deterred by the lack of support. Mulock was to stick to his guns. He did, and while it took some time for delegates to come around to the idea — the Australian colonies in particular expressed opposition — Imperial Penny Postage was finally agreed upon as an option for all regions of the Empire.

Mulock sailed home in triumph and set to work on a Canadian stamp appropriate to his achievement, and which he hoped would generate further interest in the idea. He did a remarkable job of it. The map was based on a design by Sir George Parkin, then principal of Upper Canada College. The line "We hold a vaster Empire than has been" is from "Song of Empire," an ode written by Sir Lewis Morris for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, and her crown is emblazoned at the top of the stamp.

But how did it become the world's first Christmas stamp? Why was the phrase "Xmas 1898" added to the design? The details are not clear, but some intriguing speculations have been offered. One story in circulation among philatelists has it that the stamp was to be released on November 9, the birthday of the Prince of Wales, but was changed to the birthday of the "Prince of Peace" in order to appease the Queen, who had the right to approve all stamp designs and did not always approve of the goings-on of the 57-year-old Prince of Wales. Whatever the circumstances leading to this addition, on Christmas Day 1898 Mulock mailed the first letter from Ottawa bearing the stamp to the Duke of Norfolk, who was then the British postmaster general.

Canada was the only part of the British Empire to celebrate the arrival of Imperial Penny Postage in such a fashion. While the handsome stamp may be a monument to Mulock's vanity, it nevertheless struck a chord in the hearts and minds of Canadians, and is to this day sought after by philatelists the world over.

— P.B. Waite

Creative Class

ANDREA STULTIENS, *THE NEW DYKE*, BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRITS GERRITSEN (1957), COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHY AND PASTE-UP BY ANDREA STULTIENS (2005).

In the 1950s the landscape around Pitt Meadows, British Columbia, was transformed as newcomers from the Netherlands brought the dike-building technologies of their home country to the Lower Mainland northeast of Vancouver. Following a generations-old model, they made the Pitt Polder. Polder is a Dutch word meaning land reclaimed from the sea — although in this case it was land regularly flooded by the Pitt River.

Fifty years later, Dutch photographer Andrea Stultiens has created an art exhibition and book project that juxtapose images from the 1950s with her present-day photographs of the area and its people. In 2005, she revisited the landscapes and people photographed in 1957 by Frits Gerritsen. Stultiens' work links the community to its history and environment. The exhibition Low Land, High Hills is on display at the Evergreen Cultural Centre in Coquitlam, B.C., until January 12, 2008.

THE CANADIAN CANOE MUSEUM

A magnificent sterling-silver canoe commemorating an 1841 voyage from Montreal to Fort Garry has at long last found a home in Canada. The Earl of Caledon accompanied Sir George Simpson that spring on one leg of the latter's around-the-world journey, and was so impressed that he commissioned Garrard of London in 1842 to create the thirty-eight-centimetre replica of a birchbark canoe. While researching his new book about Simpson, *Emperor of the North: Sir George Simpson and the Remarkable Story of the Hudson's Bay Company*, James Raffan found the replica in Scotland in the possession of Simpson family member Sara Haddon. Following its purchase by Canadian benefactors, and fundraising stops in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Calgary, the silver canoe has landed at its new home in The Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough, Ontario.

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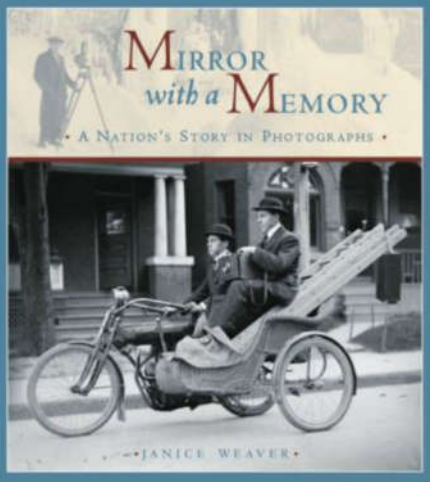

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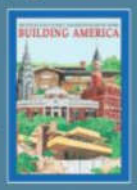

"...marvelous..."
–Philadelphia Inquirer

"...fascinating..."
–Winnipeg Free Press

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Thomas S. Axworthy on
The Order of Canada

Created forty years ago, the Order celebrates our most extraordinary citizens.

When Gov. Gen. Roland Michener announced the first ninety recipients on July 7, 1967, no one was quite sure if the Order of Canada — the country's new honour system — would be well received. One of the initial recipients, conductor Wilfrid Pelletier, for example, told the CBC that he was unsure at first whether he would accept. Pelletier's hesitation reflected the fact that until the creation of the Order, Canada's honour system had been mired in political controversy.

Honouring one's citizens has a long pedigree. England's Order of the Garter, "a society, fellowship, and college of knights," for example, was established in 1348.

As part of the empire, Canadians were eligible for British imperial honours. According to historian Christopher McCreery, author of *The Order of Canada* and *The Canadian Honours System*, prime ministers like Wilfrid Laurier were quick to add British imperial honours to their patronage arsenal. During Laurier's tenure as prime minister, from 1896 to 1911, more Canadians were knighted than at any previous period.

These honours were highly sought, and operators like Laurier were quick to see the party advantage. McCreery writes that Laurier even dangled the prospect of knighthoods to free up Parliament seats.

CP PHOTOS

Gov. Gen. Roland Michener pins the Medal of Service on Thérèse Casgrain, of Montreal, during the Order of Canada investiture ceremonies in Ottawa, November 24, 1967.

Honours that are subject to political advice are always in danger of being corrupted. In April 1918, in an attempt to cleanse Canada of such abuses, the House of Commons adopted the Nickle Resolution, requesting the King to cease bestowing titular honours, like peerages, on Canadians. This was followed in 1919 by a Report of the Special Committee on Honours, and later, by the adoption of a House resolution, which called for a complete end to Canadian honours, excepting recognition of military bravery.

No law was actually passed, but the Nickle Resolution reflected the Parliamentary consensus that Canada should not create a titled elite. The Nickle Resolution, of course, was the reason that then-prime minister Jean Chrétien used to refuse Conrad Black's desire to accept a British Lordship.

Conservative Prime Minister R. B. Bennett (1930-1935) reversed the recommendation of the Nickle Resolution, but upon returning to power, Mackenzie King once again adopted the no-title policy. There, matters stood until 1967.

According to Gordon Robertson, Clerk of the Privy Council (1967-1975), two men resurrected the concept of a Canadian honours system — Vincent Massey and Lester Pearson. Having rejected the British honours system with the Nickle Resolution, we had not replaced it with one of our own, leaving Canada, in Robertson's words, as "one of the few countries with no national system for recognizing distinguished public service."

Massey, Canadian High Commissioner to Great Britain, believed in an honours system, and in his famous 1951 Report on Culture, recommended "the institution of a new, non-titular order of merit, through which the services of Canadians could be recognized in their own country." The man who received the report, then-prime minister Louis St. Laurent, however, had little interest. Robertson recounts dryly "the level of St. Laurent's anxiety to have the advice is indicated by the fact that, with six more years in office, he did nothing whatever to implement the report."

Pearson had served under Massey in the High Commission Office in London. Historians have lavished attention on Pearson's decision to replace the British Red Ensign with a Canadian Maple Leaf flag, but his decision to create a Canadian honours system has received relatively little comment.

However, Pearson — as Robertson maintains — saw national recognition of merit "as a way to promote a sense of unity and pride of country, just like the distinctive flag." In 1966, the Centennial of Canada was fast approaching and a committee was created to review the recommendations of the Massey Report on Honours.

The first draft of the constitution of the Order of Canada proposed three grades: Companion, Officer, and Member. But the Pearson cabinet initially approved the establishment of the Order of Canada with the Companion level and two junior medals: the Medal of Courage and Medal of Service. The Queen approved the Order by letters patent on April 17, 1967, and then-governor general Roland Michener in July appointed the first recipients.

Pearson was wise enough to avoid political manipulation of the honours system. The constitution of the Order clearly states that "nominations for the award will not be made by the Government, but directly to the Governor General by an Advisory Council composed as follows: the Chief Justice of Canada; the Clerk of the Privy Council; the Under Secretary of State; the Chairman of the Canada Council; the President of the Royal Society of Canada; the President of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada."

Roland Michener made it clear to the first advisory council that while he would not guarantee he would approve everyone the council recommended, he would not approve anyone the council did not recommend.

Between them, Pearson and Michener ensured the independence and non-partisanship of the appointment process. Compared to recent British controversy, there has been no partisan wrangling about appointments to the Order. The number of those appointed is also relatively small, compared with other countries.

In 1967, the first recipients included Vincent Massey, who had recommended the concept in 1951, and Louis St. Laurent, who had sat on Massey's advice.

The achievements of the initial inductees were notable: Maurice Richard and Father David Bauer for hockey; Hugh MacLennan and Gabrielle Roy for literature; Arthur Lismer for art; Thérèse Casgrain for politics; Wilder Penfield for medicine, and Donald Creighton for history. The initial announcement from Pearson's press office, however, had promised an even wider scope of expertise: *The Globe and Mail* reported that the press release had stated that the new Order of Canada's motto "*desiderantes meliorem patriam*" was based on Hebrews 12:16. *The Globe* happily reported that the verse reads: "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birth right."

This seemed too adventurous, even for the summer of love, so the Prime Minister's Office hurriedly put out the fact that the Latin motto was based on Hebrews 11:16, which has the more uplifting injunction: "But now they desire a better country."

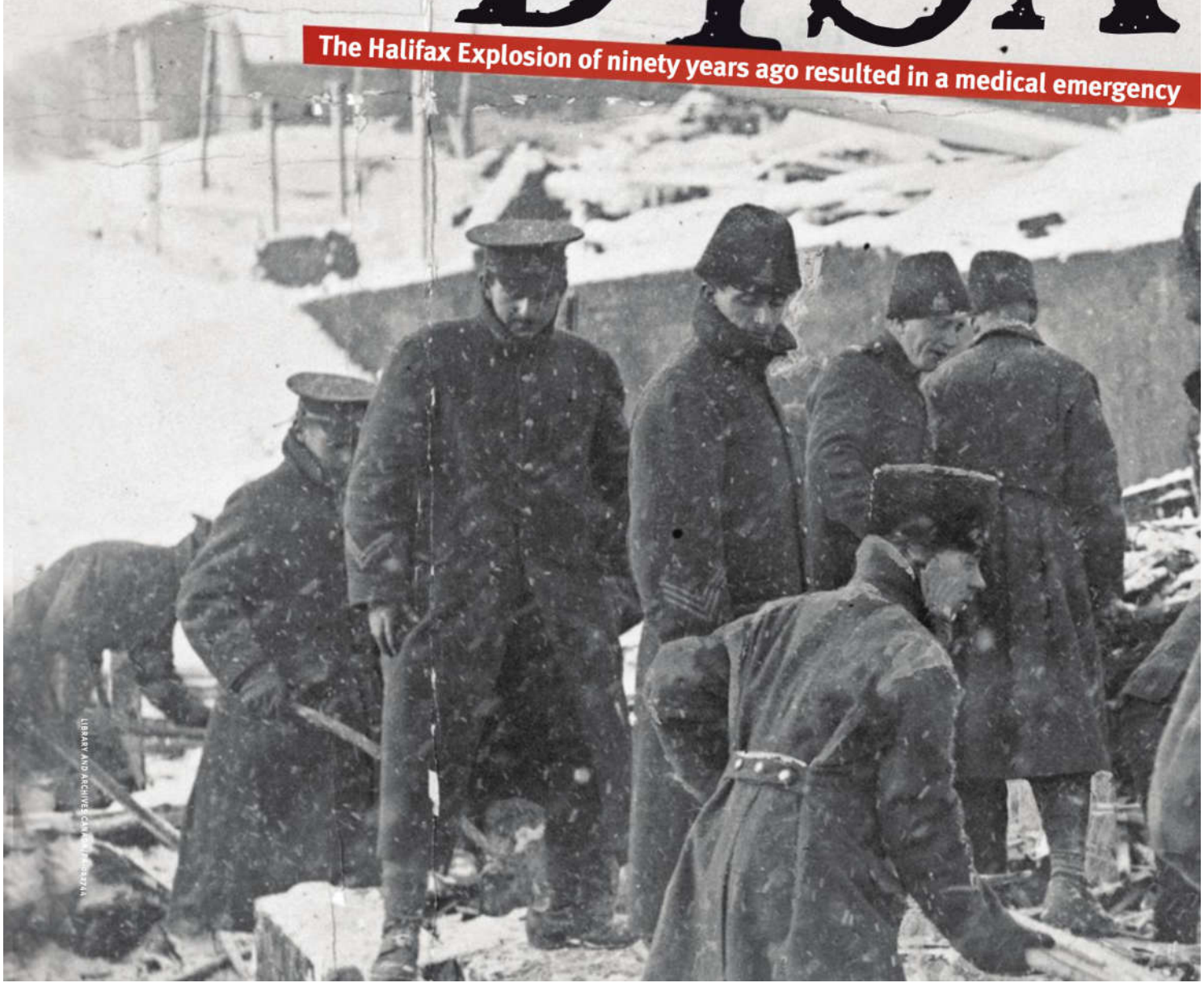
As a very junior assistant to the Honourable Walter Gordon, president of the Privy Council, I arrived in Ottawa just as the Order of Canada was being announced.

Full of the enthusiasm and certitude of youth, in one of our first meetings I argued with Mr. Gordon about the retrograde nature of creating such an elite in our democratic age. Mr. Gordon listened politely and then wisely disregarded everything I had just said. Far from creating an elite, as I had feared, the Order instead includes thousands of ordinary citizens who have done extraordinary things. Lester Pearson's life was devoted to public service, merit, and improving his country and the world. The Order he created is a testament to these enduring values.

Thomas S. Axworthy is Chair of the Centre for the Study of Democracy at Queen's University. In 2002, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada for his contributions in promoting Canadian history.

ON THE FRONT OF DISA

The Halifax Explosion of ninety years ago resulted in a medical emergency



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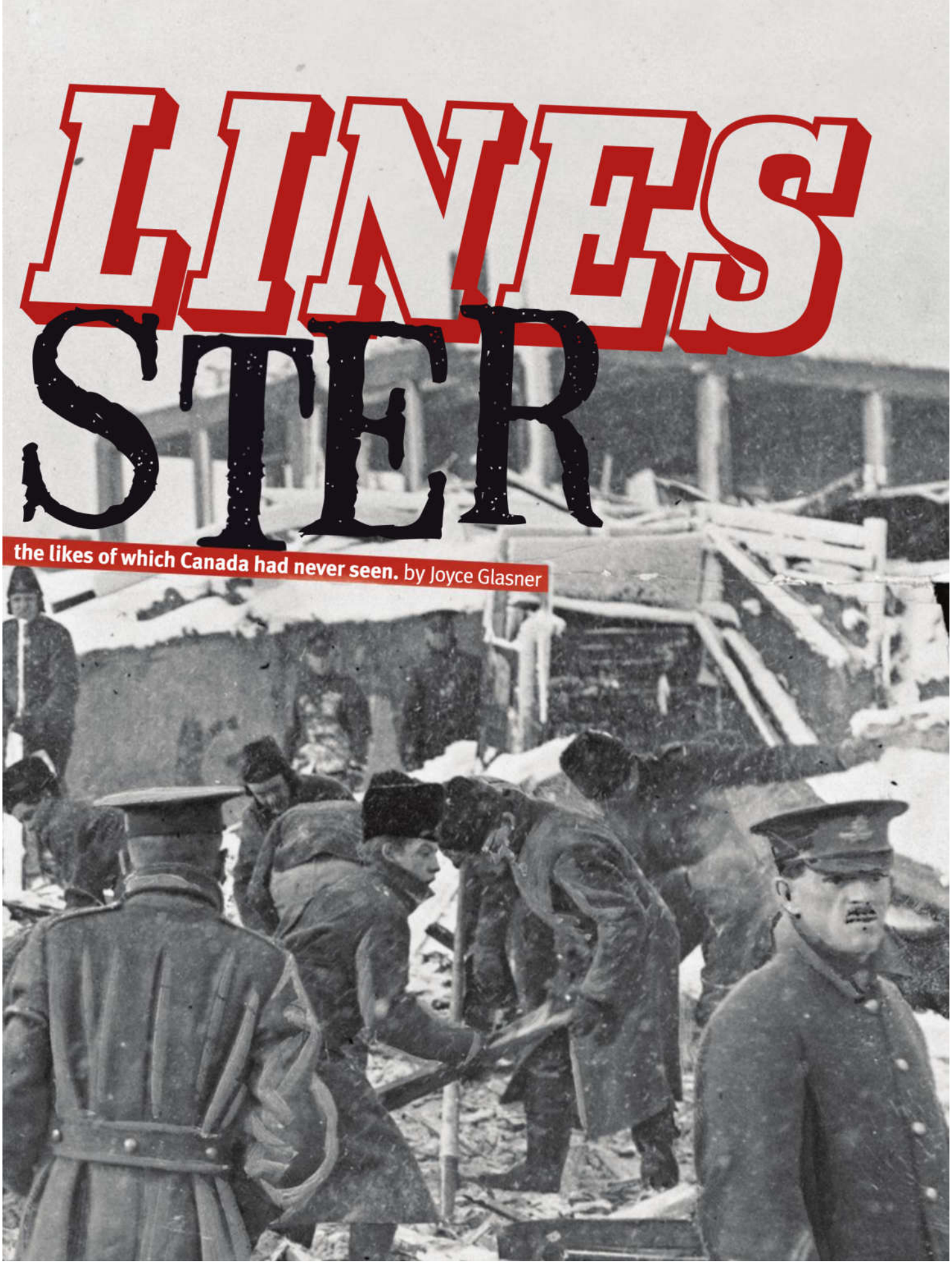
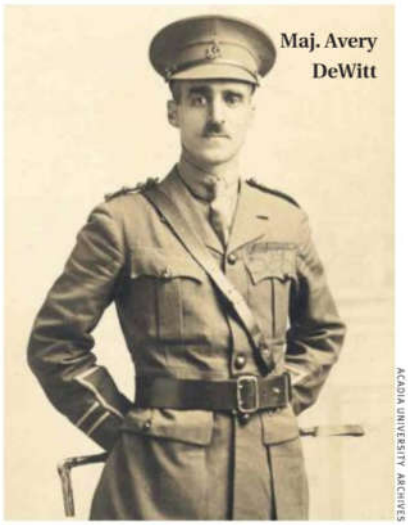
LINES STER

the likes of which Canada had never seen. by Joyce Glasner



When Maj. Avery DeWitt arrived on the outskirts of Halifax on the morning of December 6, 1917, he was appalled by what he encountered. Where the thriving community of Richmond once stood, there was now nothing but hectares of blackened, smouldering rubble. Here and there, the skeletal remains of a church or factory loomed against the skyline. Everything else was flattened. A dense layer of smoke blotted out the sun and an eerie silence hung over the ruins, punctuated now and then by screams and muffled cries for help. Up ahead, DeWitt saw dozens of badly injured men, women, and children being loaded onto a battered train, which sat idling on the tracks.


Maj. Avery DeWitt

ACADIA UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

DeWitt, the physician at Camp Aldershot in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley, had been en route to Halifax to attend a meeting that morning when the *Mont Blanc*, a French freighter carrying a lethal cargo of over twenty-five hundred tonnes of explosives in her hold, steamed into Halifax Harbour. The First World War was in its third year and troops, supplies, and munitions from all over North America passed through Halifax on their way to the Western Front, making it one of the most vital ports in the British Empire. Traffic in the harbour was particularly heavy that morning, with more than forty-five vessels loading cargo, awaiting convoy, or being repaired. As the *Mont Blanc* neared the entrance to the harbour at the Narrows, she met the *Imo*, a Norwegian ship carrying relief supplies for Belgium. The 5,041-tonne tramp steamer had strayed too far into the *Mont Blanc*'s water, putting the two vessels on a collision course. As the distance closed between them, the vessels attempted to manoeuvre around one another, but to no avail. Spectators onshore watched in disbelief as the *Imo* rammed into the French freighter, cutting a three-metre gash in her starboard bow. A blaze broke out on the *Mont Blanc*'s deck, and, fearing for their lives, the captain and crew abandoned ship. The burning vessel continued to drift down the harbour toward the city until it struck Pier 6. At approximately 9:05 a.m. the flames reached the TNT and other explosives in her hold, triggering the worst man-made explosion prior to Hiroshima.

Within moments, houses, schools, factories, and churches were reduced to rubble. Trains and vessels were demolished. Automobiles were hurled through the air like toys. So severe was the blast that the *Mont Blanc*'s anchor shank, which weighed half a tonne, flew three-and-a-half kilometres across the Halifax peninsula, landing on the mainland side of the Northwest Arm, where it remains as a memorial to this day. One hundred and thirty hectares in Halifax's north end were laid waste. Dartmouth, directly across the harbour, was also in ruins. Approximately fifteen hundred people were killed instantly and nine thousand were injured. In the following days and weeks another five hundred perished as a result of wounds sustained in the blast. Hundreds of victims were buried beneath the wreckage, and fires raged throughout the devastated area.

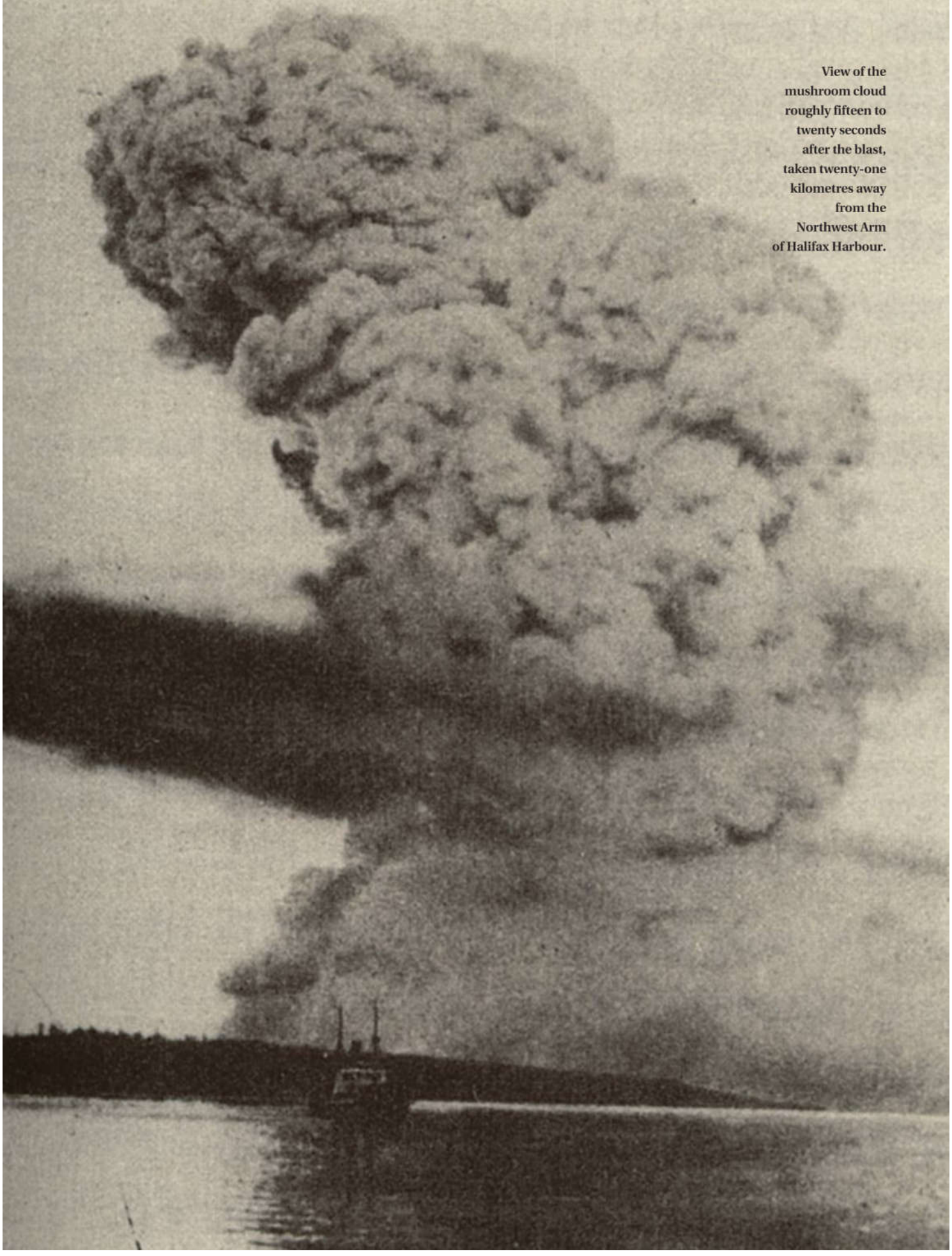
Previous page: **Soldiers engage in rescue work after the Halifax Explosion.**

Below: **Volunteers and soldiers search the snow-covered rubble for survivors and bodies.**

NSARM ARCHIVES

When the explosion occurred, the Dominion Atlantic Railway (DAR) train on which DeWitt was travelling was far enough away that it wasn't affected. But by the time it reached Rockingham, on the outskirts of Halifax, George Graham, the railway's general manager, was waiting for it. Graham had been in Halifax when the explosion occurred. When he discovered the telegraph and telephone lines were cut, and that the trains couldn't get in or out of the city, he had rushed to Rockingham on foot — a distance of about six kilometres — to send out word of the disaster. Graham explained the desperate situation in Halifax to the passengers on DeWitt's train and asked if there were any

NOVA SCOTIA ARCHIVES



View of the mushroom cloud roughly fifteen to twenty seconds after the blast, taken twenty-one kilometres away from the Northwest Arm of Halifax Harbour.

doctors, nurses, or Red Cross workers aboard. DeWitt immediately stepped forward.

The dark-haired thirty-six-year-old came from a prominent medical family in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. His father, Dr. George DeWitt, had received his medical degree from Harvard, and his sister, Nellie, was a nurse. As a member of the Canadian Army Medical Corps, Maj. Avery DeWitt was better prepared than most civilians to deal with large-scale medical emergencies. However,

NSARM ARCHIVES

Emergency relief hospital in the Y.M.C.A, Barrington Street, Halifax.

with thousands in urgent need of immediate medical attention he, like every other physician in the area, would soon find his skills tested in ways he could never have imagined.

Graham put DeWitt on a locomotive, which took him to Richmond, where a train known as the Number 10 was idling on the tracks.

"The condition of the track and surrounding district was almost too horrible to describe," DeWitt wrote in a letter to the Halifax Disaster Record Office. "Men, women, and children were lying round on the ground on boards, broken beds, doors, or anything they could get and suffering untold agonies. … With the help of several travellers, soldiers and train crew, we put about 112 cases on board the train."

Conductor J.C. Gillespie was tremendously relieved to have a doctor to attend to the blood-soaked, shell-shocked victims on board. As he ushered DeWitt through the cars, Gillespie described what had occurred on board earlier that morning:

The Number 10 was running behind schedule. It was just past Rockingham when the shock wave from the blast slammed into the train with what felt like the force of a torpedo. Screams filled the air as each of the windows shattered in unison. The cars tipped up, balancing precariously on one rail for a second or two before coming back to earth with a resounding crash. Fortunately, the engineer was the only one aboard who was wounded — he had been hurled against the boiler head — and, despite his injuries, he insisted on remaining at the helm. Although slightly battered, the train was still operational — the only damage seemed to be the shattered windows — so they proceeded cautiously towards the city.

As they neared Richmond, the tracks, which were buried beneath tonnes of debris, became impassable. Minutes after the train came to a stop, hordes of ragged, bleeding, desperate people emerged from the ruins. Those who could walk stumbled toward the train pleading for help. Many were barefoot and far too scantily clad for the December chill. As he later reported to the director of the Halifax Disaster Record Office, Gillespie was distressed by the sight of so many "cold, barefooted, and torn people." Something had to be done to ease their suffering. He decided to take as many aboard as possible. "I went to work," he said. "Filled the train full."

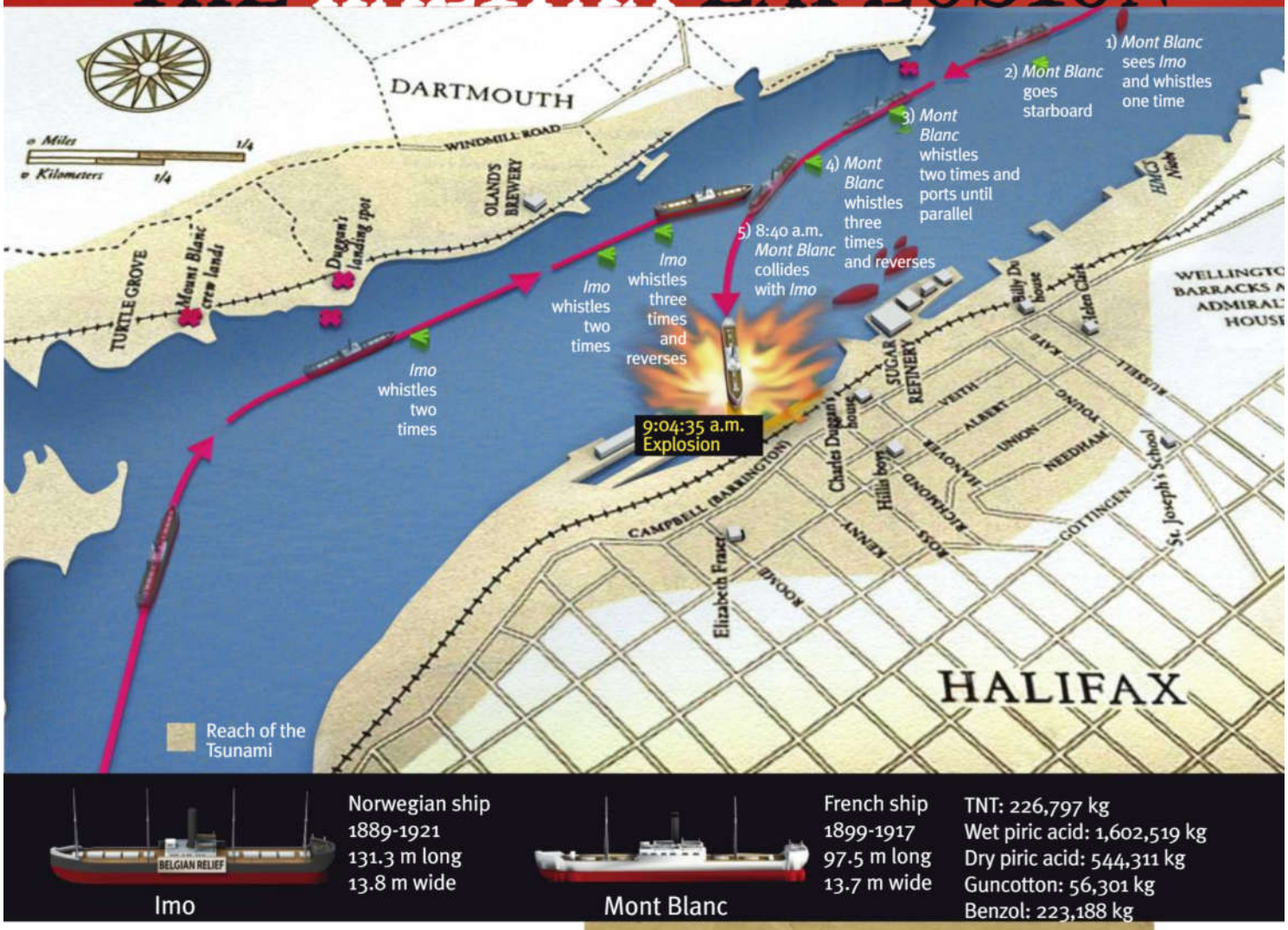
As DeWitt surveyed the trainload of seriously injured victims who were eyeing him hopefully, he was thankful he'd grabbed his medical kit before leaving his home that morning. Although his scant equipment and supplies would barely begin to cover the countless injuries, it was better than nothing. As he later told the Halifax Disaster Record Office, "Fortunately, I had my hypodermic case, and morphine was a great blessing to many that morning."

Doctors, nurses, Red Cross workers, medical students, and volunteers all across Halifax found themselves in similar situations that day. Shortly after the blast occurred, the wounded and dying flocked to hospitals and doctors' offices. Before long, every medical facility was overflowing. At that time, there were over a dozen hospitals scattered throughout Halifax and Dartmouth. All had sustained damage — windows had shattered, ceilings had collapsed, and plaster and debris had rained down on beds, operating tables, and equipment. In addition, many of the hospitals were understaffed and ill-equipped. There were only three X-ray machines in the entire city. And the newly opened Camp Hill Hospital — built as a convalescent facility for returned soldiers — contained no surgical equipment whatsoever. Even basic necessities, such as hot water bottles, were in short supply, as were morphine, anesthetic, antiseptics, and sterilizing equipment. These shortages complicated an already critical state of affairs.

While doctors, nurses and volunteers grappled with the deluge of casualties that morning, city officials struggled to restore order. The situation was dire. Fires raged

MAP: MICHEL ROULEAU / SOURCE CURSE OF THE NARROWS

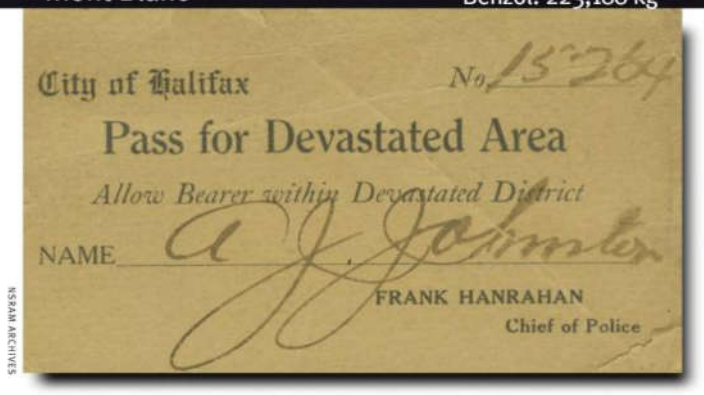
THE HALIFAX EXPLOSION



out of control, and the fire department itself was in shambles. Several of its members, including the fire chief, had been killed, and its only motorized vehicle had been demolished in the blast. The police force was in little better shape. It lacked the training, equipment, and manpower to deal with a disaster of this magnitude. Added to this was the fact that twenty thousand people were suddenly destitute, homeless, and in need of shelter, food, clothing, and medical care.

Since Mayor Peter Martin happened to be out of town at the time, it fell to Deputy Mayor Henry Colwell to take on the unenviable position of authority that day. At 11:30 a.m., an emergency meeting took place between Colwell, Lieutenant Governor McCallum Grant, former mayor Robert MacIlreith, and a few members of city council. During this meeting, the groundwork was laid for the organization of rescue and relief.

One thing Colwell had working in his favour was the fact that about five thousand sailors and soldiers were stationed in the city at the time. Therefore, control of the search-and-rescue operation was turned over to the military. Before long, an armed guard was posted around the devastated area — only those carrying official passes were permitted to enter — and search parties began systematically combing the ruins for vic-


City of Halifax No. 15264

Pass for Devastated Area

Allow Bearer within Devastated District

NAME A. J. Johnston

FRANK HANRAHAN
Chief of Police

NSPAM ARCHIVES

Pass for Devastated Area, number 15264, issued to A. J. Johnston.

Identifying the Dead

Bodies in Chebucto Road Mortuary.

One of the greatest challenges officials faced in the wake of the Halifax Explosion was that of dealing with the overwhelming number of bodies. Since many who died in the explosion were disfigured or burned beyond recognition, identifying the victims required some knowledge of forensic identification techniques. As chance would have it, just five years earlier the *Titanic* had gone down off the coast of Newfoundland. Afterwards, hundreds of the bodies were brought to Halifax for identification and burial. Robert MacIlreith, who had been mayor at the time of the *Titanic* disaster, had learned a great deal about forensic identification from that experience. This knowledge proved invaluable when dealing with the explosion's casualties. MacIlreith instructed those involved in the search and rescue to tag each body recovered from the ruins. These labels bore the name of the street, and, where possible, the number of the house where the body was found. Any personal effects discovered near the bodies were also collected.

From the *Titanic* experience, MacIlreith knew that the handful of private undertakers' morgues in the city would be quickly overwhelmed by the multitude of bodies recovered from the ruins. Therefore, a temporary morgue would be necessary. He selected the basement of the Chebucto Road School, which was on the edge of the devastated area, for this purpose. R.N. Stone, an embalming professor from Toronto, and A.A. Schieter, an undertaking expert from Kitchener, were placed in charge of the mortuary. Soldiers delivered the bodies to the morgue, where they were then stripped and washed. All clothing and personal effects were removed and placed in cotton bags. Each bag was given a number, which corresponded with that on the body. Often these personal effects were the only means of identification. — J.G.

tims. All vehicles were commandeered for transporting the wounded to hospital.

Not long after the search-and-rescue effort got underway, word spread that the military magazine at Wellington Barracks was thought to be on fire and another explosion imminent. Panic ensued. Soldiers went door-to-door, telling everyone to head for the open spaces at the Commons near downtown and at Point Pleasant Park on the southern tip of the Halifax peninsula. Streams of bloodied and traumatized people fled from the devastated area. Hundreds of those trapped beneath the ruins were left behind to perish in the fires.

Although many doctors and nurses ignored the evacuation notice and continued working, others stopped what they were doing and transferred their patients out to the relative safety of open spaces. In Dartmouth, Dr. M.S. Dickson's house was filled with wounded people seeking medical attention that morning. Annie Anderson, a medical student who boarded with Dickson, described the scene to the Halifax Disaster Record Office: "The injuries were head gashes and cuts about the eyes. Saw one woman with her face cut open, and the froth oozing through a cut in the windpipe. She had been cut by heavy plate glass in a shop where she worked."

Dickson was in the midst of amputating an arm when the warning of a second explosion went round. With the help of Anderson, he moved his operating table and the houseful of badly wounded patients out to the street. There, he completed the amputation and continued to patch up an endless stream of casualties until he was informed the crisis had passed and he could move his operating theatre back inside.

By 1:00 p.m. there wasn't space aboard the Number 10 train for a single extra casualty. After filling up with water and coal at the roundhouse, conductor Gillespie decided to take the trainload of injured to the town of Truro, 100 kilometres north of Halifax. There, he was certain the victims would be sheltered and cared for. By that time, word of the disaster had spread across the country and into the New England states. Boston, as well as the Nova Scotia communities of Wolfville and New Glasgow, organized relief trains to deliver badly needed doctors, nurses, and medical supplies to the beleaguered city. At Windsor Junction, about 15 kilometres from central Halifax, the Number 10 met the train from Wolfville bound for Halifax. Since there were more casualties aboard the Number 10 than could be dealt with by a single physician, a doctor and nurse from the relief train transferred to the Truro-bound train.

Gillespie set them up in a car at the opposite end of the train from DeWitt, and they continued on their journey.

The relief train from Wolfville was the first to arrive in Halifax, at about three o'clock that afternoon. Lt.- Col. Frederick McKelvey Bell, head of the medical committee, met the doctors and nurses on the edge of Richmond and directed them to city hall, where they would be detailed to a hospital. Since the roads in the devastated area were largely impassable, they were forced to walk some distance before being met by a fleet of cars. The doctors and nurses picked their way through mountains of debris that contained overturned carts, smashed automobiles, dead horses, and horribly mutilated corpses. Every so often they came across piles of blackened and twisted bodies, stacked like cordwood, awaiting delivery to the morgue. Many of the returned soldiers who worked in the ruins that day stated that the gruesome sights they witnessed in Richmond were as bad as, if not worse than, anything they'd seen at the front.

The scenes in the hospitals were almost as horrible. Camp Hill Hospital, a simple, two-storey structure on the corner of Robie Street and Jubilee Road in Halifax, was designed to house a maximum of 280 patients. That day, its wards, corridors, dining room, kitchen, offices, and closets were crammed with fifteen hundred critically injured people. A steady stream of stretcher bearers delivered load after load of wounded. Mattresses lined the floors and everyone had to step carefully to avoid tripping over the patients. The multitude of filthy, blood-soaked victims appeared to one Sister of Charity as "shapeless masses of gore … the clothes stiff with blood, or with blood and water, as many had been taken from the harbour." Adding to the chaos were the dozens of people wandering from ward to ward in search of missing loved ones. Hundreds of children were separated from their parents that day, many never to be reunited.

Since the regular operating room in Camp Hill had not yet been fitted up, doctors performed surgery wherever they could find space. Temporary operating rooms were set up in the kitchen and dining room. The doctors operated on kitchen tables, and, in many cases, were forced to use kitchen utensils in lieu of surgical tools. And when surgical thread ran out, they resorted to using ordinary cotton thread to stitch up the wounds.

The variety and severity of wounds suffered in the explosion were extraordinary. Third-degree burns, fractures of all kinds, amputated limbs, gashes, facial lacerations, and eye injuries were widespread. Flying glass and shrapnel left many horribly disfigured. The Halifax Disaster Record Office recorded the observations of Florence J. Murray, a medical student who volunteered at Camp Hill Hospital: "Saw one woman lying with her face cut off. It was lying on the left side like a trap door. The face had been cut across the forehead, round the cheek and to the corner of the mouth. … The nasal and frontal bones were cut away and the base of the brain was exposed. … This patient died."

In almost every case the wounds were packed with dirt, plaster, cinders, and glass, making the onerous task of patching them up that much more difficult.

Maj. DeWitt also faced grievous injuries needing immediate attention — and his situation was complicated by the fact that he was on a moving train, with the only surgical equipment available to him being a pair of scissors and forceps. DeWitt had no choice but to attempt to remove the damaged eyeballs of two critically injured patients. With the help of two assistants, DeWitt managed to complete the enucleations successfully. However, any feeling of satisfaction he may have derived from performing this tricky operation in such difficult circumstances, was, no doubt, overshadowed by the fact that three other patients aboard the train — all children — died before they reached Truro that day.

The Number 10 train finally reached Truro at four o'clock that afternoon. Since Truro had no hospital, the courthouse, academy, and fire hall had all been converted into temporary hospitals. But the doctors and nurses in

Was it sabotage?

Rumours of sabotage by German agents were rife after the Halifax Explosion, and with Canada engrossed in the First World War, and German submarines lying close to Halifax Harbour, the wartime adage "Loose lips sink ships" was on everyone's mind.

Two days after the largest man-made explosion the world had ever seen, the *Halifax Herald* declared: "Behind [it] all, as responsible for the disaster, is that arch criminal, the Kaiser of Germany, who forced our empire and allies into the fearful war."

One widespread rumour suggested that the captain and pilot of the *Imo* were murdered by a crew member just before the collision with the *Mont Blanc*. This could have allowed a German spy on board to orchestrate an accident in the harbour. However, a lone witness on the bridge of the *Imo*, helmsman John Johansen, said that the captain had given all commands and signals.

During the inquiry that followed the explosion, officers from the harbour offices revealed they had received calls from people asking the locations and movements of individual ships. Newspaper headlines expressed the public's outrage the next day: "Secret News Sent by Public Phone."

In 1922, rumours erupted again when Dr. Samuel Prince, author of a sociological study of the explosion, declared that sabotage was a real possibility.

But the hearings and inquiries into the cause of the explosion provided no definite answers. And to this day, no one is entirely sure what happened on the bridge of the *Imo* that fateful December morning. —Christopher Webb

Child in upper right was one of hundreds who suffered eye injuries in the blast. Meanwhile, some unidentified babies remained unclaimed and were eventually placed in orphanages.

BLINDED BY THE BLAST

Of all the injuries sustained in the Halifax Explosion, eye injuries were by far the most prevalent. Throughout the city people had flocked to windows to watch the spectacle of the blazing vessel in the harbour. When the explosion occurred, every window for kilometres around imploded. Glass shards left 592 people with critical eye injuries. Almost half of them needed one or both eyes removed.

Soon after arriving at Camp Hill on the evening of the day of the explosion, Dr. George Cox, a forty-six-year-old ocularist from New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, had rounded up enough eye patients to keep him busy for several days. The injuries, Cox later recorded in his notes, included eyelids that were "cut into literal fringes" and glass-studded eyeballs that appeared to be nothing but "bags of glass." In many cases "there were no more eyeballs. It was as if the ball had been laid open and then stuffed with pieces of glass or sometimes crockery, brick splinters, and on palpation, they would clink," Cox wrote.

For the next five days Cox did nothing but "patch up eyes," only stopping to rest when he was too exhausted to stay on his feet another moment. In total, he performed 75 enucleations. In four or five cases, he wrote, he was forced to remove both eyeballs — "or rather, what was left of them." — J.G.

the area had all departed for Halifax, leaving only DeWitt and the other doctor aboard to continue caring for the casualties.

It wasn't until DeWitt was overseeing the unloading of his patients that he actually met the other doctor, as well as the nurse who had been working at the other end of the train. When he discovered who they were, he was astonished — it was his father, Dr. George DeWitt, and his sister, Nellie, who had come aboard the Number 10 at Windsor Junction that morning.

But they had little time to marvel at this unusual turn of events. Like doctors, nurses, and volunteers all over Halifax, the DeWitts worked day and night for the following week without a thought for themselves.

As word of the disaster spread, aid began pouring in from across Canada and the United States. Medical units from Rhode Island and Massachusetts, as well as doctors and nurses from various parts of Canada, arrived in Halifax to lend much-needed assistance to the first responders. Despite this generous outpouring of aid, it would be months before a semblance of normalcy returned to the city, and years before the scars would finally begin to heal.

Joyce Glasner is the author of *The Halifax Explosion: Surviving the Blast That Shook a Nation*. An editor and freelance writer, Glasner lives in Halifax.

Et Cetera

The Town that Died: The True Story of the Greatest Man-Made Explosion Before Hiroshima. By Michael J. Bird. McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd, Toronto, 1962.

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Shattered City: The Halifax Explosion and the Road to Recovery. By Janet F. Kitz. Nimbus Publishing, Halifax, 1989.

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Breaking Lent, by
Cornelius Krieghoff, 1847.

The Way we ATE

From the *ortolan pâté* of New France to Alberta's prairie oysters, Canadians have long enjoyed a rich culinary history. by Fiona Lucas

A salad bowl may symbolize Canada's multicultural society, but a bowl of greens doesn't go far when describing this country's culinary history. From the imported haute cuisine favoured by the upper crust of New France to the throw-it-on-the-fire chuckwagon cookery of the lonesome prairie cowboy, there's a lot on the menu when it comes to Canada's food heritage. The way we ate says much about who we were, where we came from, and how we adapted to new circumstances. In early Canada, food was central to building and maintaining community.

In the stories on the following pages, we touch down on four culinary moments in the vast tapestry of Canadian historical life: early New France, late eighteenth-century Nova Scotia, pre-Rebellion Ontario, and Alberta in the 1920s. The cast of characters in these diaries and letters may be mostly fictitious, but the contexts of their foodways are real. Correspondents in genuine reports were similarly eager to provide information about food for the folks at home in the old countries.

Canadian women's two prime daily activities, as seen in the fictional accounts by "Janet," "Ellen," and "Maude," were raising children and ensuring sustenance. And the story of Claude — an actual soldier in early French Canada who describes a sumptuous Christmas feast — reminds us that early Canadian cookery sometimes went far beyond the basics.

The way we eat is central to understanding ourselves as members of distinct social cultures. Newcomers to Canada sought continuity as best they could by planting seeds carried from home, or baking favourite breads, as the "Fraser" family does with their oats, or making a common item such as jam with a newly met fruit like prairie saskatoon berries, or invoking famous cooks like Vatel, the renowned seventeenth-century French chef.

One way to understand Canada is to read about our foodways. These accounts from some of Canada's historians of food give a glimpse into part of that culinary heritage.

Fiona Lucas, co-ordinator of The Way We Ate, works for Museum and Heritage Services of Toronto, has an M.A. in Canadian history and is co-founder and president of Culinary Historians of Ontario. She's also the author of *Hearth and Home: Women and the Art of Open Hearth Cooking* (J. Lorimer, Toronto, 2006).

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Haute cuisine in New France

by Hélène-Andrée Bizier

The following is a true account of an event that took place in Montreal, then known as Ville-Marie, on December 25, 1665. That year, the plague had killed more than 80,000 Londoners, Philip IV of Spain had died and the Second Anglo-Dutch war had begun. The first companies of the elite Carignan-Salières Regiment had arrived in New France in June to protect the colony from the Iroquois invasion. A young drummer, Claude de Mousson, was a real person who was part of that regiment.

When we think of New France, images of a rustic lifestyle often spring to mind. We think of the first settlers who cleared the land and the coureurs des bois (runners of the woods). Although the pioneers had a tough life, that particular depiction of the past doesn't quite reflect the reality. Some of the French men attracted to New France were senior state officials. Their need to live in Quebec as they did in Paris demanded a certain level of luxury that they displayed ostentatiously for their compatriots to envy ... or copy. The colonists had simpler habits, but many already had "possessions" in France: a house, furniture, an expected inheritance, or the residue of an estate. They took with them things they liked, even food items and utensils they feared they would not find in Canada. These French people were familiar with coffee and chocolate, candied and dried fruit, olive oil from Spain and Provence, Bayonne ham, fine jams, wine, rum, and beer. In the seventeenth century, none could forget the delicate flavours of the feasts that were laid out at Christmas in France.

At the end of 1665, there was a young drummer — a soldier whose task it was to beat out the rhythm for the troops — living in Montreal. His name was Claude de Mousson. He belonged to the who's who of French society, which was probably the reason he was invited to spend Christmas with the dignitaries in Ville-Marie, the most famous of whom were Jeanne Mance, co-founder of Ville-Marie, and Marguerite Bourgeoys, who founded the first teaching community in Montreal.

During the day of December 25, 1665, after celebrating a very joyous Christmas, Claude took a break to write to his mother.

Based on his account, we understand that a little before midnight on the evening of December 24 into December 25, the inhabitants of Ville-Marie came out onto the paths leading to a simple chapel built on Saint-Paul Street near Hôtel-Dieu Hospital. The French and the Algonquin were dressed in all their finery — the latter wearing "clothing made from deer hide, decorated with cowries and fur pelts."

After the mass, Claude de Mousson wrote: "We were all invited to a highly civil feast by the Abbot, who received us, and some notable guests, at the seigneurial castle."

LOUISE BILODEAU

Drouin House on Île d'Orléans near Quebec City was built during the French Regime around 1730.

PARKS CANADA

French people were familiar with coffee and chocolate, candied and dried fruit, olive oil from Spain and Provence, Bayonne ham, fine jams, wine, rum, and beer.

The menu presented to the dignitaries of Ville-Marie was definitely enough to whet the appetite and delay sleep. "The Abbot regaled us with a pie filled with young pigeon. The *ortolan* pâté could not have been any better. And well, if I may be so bold, I think the Prince de Condé's chief steward, Vatel himself, was most impressed. We even had sweetened bread with raisins and candied lemon rind. We had wine and beer to drink." This is how we discovered that the great French chef François Vatel — who would commit suicide at the Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte on April 24, 1671, in the midst of preparing an impossibly demanding series of feasts for King Louis XIV and his entourage — was already famous deep inside a colony, and was possibly already serving as an inspiration.

The guests had stayed up late and, shortly before leaving the seigneurial abode, they made many toasts: "A toast to Spanish wine, to the health of the King and Queen, the Queen Mother, and the entire royal family."

Full, and maybe bordering on inebriation, Claude de Mousson then attended the dawn and day masses. It was customary for the religious to attend all three masses. The church vibrated under the devotional prayers, and hymn followed hymn, sung in French as well as in Algonquin "by a tribe from the Outaouais River," wrote de Mousson.

"Marquise," de Mousson added, "I would have so loved for you to hear them. They sang earnestly, especially the women."

He probably did not get to sleep before late on the morning of December 25, as the drummers and flutists in the regiment had been ordered "to play a dawn serenade to the commander of the area, the colonel, and Abbot Souart, the representative of the lords."

Hélène-Andrée Bizier is an historian and the author of *Le menu quotidien en Nouvelle-France* (Art Global, Montreal, 2005).

The Church's Cheese

Quebec's famed Oka cheese is known for its soft creamy flavour and pungent aroma. Oka takes its name from a former Algonquin tribe that named itself after a totemic animal called the *okow*, or golden pickerel. The cheese had its beginnings when the Cistercians — also known as Trappists — immigrated to Canada in 1881 after being expelled from France. They found refuge with the Sulpician Order in Montreal, which offered the monks a parcel of land in the Lake of Two Mountains area near Oka, Quebec. Within a few years, an agricultural school was created and Oka cheese was born. The cheese's distinctive flavour comes from a special curing process in which cheese rounds are painted with brine and left to age in cellars.

—Christopher Webb

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Foodways of the First Nations

Costume of Domiciliated Indians of America by E. Close, 1814.

WILD RICE MOON HARVEST

For the Ojibwa Nation, the wild rice harvest was so significant they named a month of their autumn calendar "wild rice moon." Typically, women and children moved through rivers and lakes in the northern Great Lakes region, bending and pounding the stalks to shake out the grain.

Wild rice — which is actually a type of grass and not true rice — was used by First Nations to thicken soups, dressed with maple syrup, or used in a dish called *tassimanonny*, a mixture of rice, corn, and fish.

CORN FOR THE CONFEDERACY

Corn was an essential food for the Iroquois. Along with beans and squash, it was referred to as one of the "three sisters" of food. The grain made its way north along First Nations trading routes from Central America, where it was first cultivated around 5500 BCE.

Corn was roasted or steamed, buried and fermented, dried, ground into flour and made into popcorn. The Iroquois even prepared corn coffee, used corn oil to prevent dandruff, and utilised corn in a number of medicines and poultices.

SUGAR BUSH BLESSINGS

In spring, First Nations in Eastern and Central Canada would wait for the "sugar moon," a blessed sign from the Great Creator that marked the start of the maple sap harvest. The Iroquois and other Great Lakes nations would hold great ceremonies, building a large fire at the foot of the biggest maple in the village.

The sap was placed in wooden containers, hot rocks were dropped into it, and it was then kneaded until it was a thick, creamy syrup. The syrup was most frequently used as a sweetener for soups, meat, and wild rice.

—Christopher Webb

Early fusion in Pictou

by Marie Nightingale

This imaginary account takes place in Nova Scotia following the expulsion of the Acadians (1755-62) and the arrival of waves of immigrants from Great Britain, continental Europe, and thirteen British colonies that were declared the independent United States of America in 1776. Among the new settlers were German-speaking Protestants, a few of whom settled in the Tatamagouche area. The first Scots to land in Pictou arrived on the Hector, *an actual ship, in 1773. The parents of the fictional twelve-year-old "Janet Fraser" were on that ship.*

Monday, May 22, 1786: Papa came home today and told Mama that he had met a man from Tatamagouche, about 30 miles from us here in Pictou. He said he invited Mr. Langille and his family, who are German-speaking people, to sup with us on Saturday. They will come by boat, and they will have to stay overnight at least. That should be fun. I hope they have a girl my age.

Tuesday, May 23, 1786: Mama is wondering what to cook for our guests when they come. She says we should grind some wheat into flour to make griddle scones, but turning that hand quern is so arduous, we'll probably settle for our beloved oatcakes instead. That's fine with me, as long as we have enough oats to make porridge for breakfast. And we'll have to be sure that Bossie provides plenty of cream to dip our spoonfuls of porridge in. Since we don't have enough wooden bowls for everyone, we'll have to serve the porridge in one communal bowl. But we'll each have a deep wooden spoon so we can lift some of the porridge and then dip it into the cream. Yum! And there won't be any concern about eating them in the traditional way — that is, standing up. There won't be enough chairs for us all to sit, anyway.

Wednesday, May 24, 1786: Mama says we will start with a soup. It should really be cock-a-leekie (chicken and leek), but none of our hens is old enough to have stopped laying, and with eggs as precious as they are, we can't kill a productive hen just to make soup. Papa says there's still some finnan haddie (smoked haddock) hanging in the smokehouse and a fairly good supply of potatoes, so we can have *cullen skink* instead. I'm glad, because that's my favourite. Funny name, but *skink* is the Scottish word for soup, and our family still speaks the Gaelic. Mama says to make enough *skink* for twelve people she will need two pounds of smoked haddock, eight medium-size potatoes, two onions, and a quart of milk for the broth.

PARKS CANADA

Replica of eighteenth-century wooden bowls and jars, from Nova Scotia's Fortress of Louisbourg.

HIGHLAND VILLAGE MUSEUM

A historical re-enactor prepares the morning meal at the MacEachern House, ca. 1810, part of the Highland Village Museum in Iona, Nova Scotia.

Kartoffelsuppe

ISTOCK

Marguerite also has to help her mother with the cooking. She said her favourite soup is *kartoffelsuppe*, a mixture of sauerkraut, potatoes, salt pork, and browned flour to thicken it.

Thursday, May 25, 1786: Today, Mama is trying to decide what the main course will be. Imagine! More than one course for a meal! Papa says it's so special that he will dress in his kilt and we are to wear our best blue homespun dresses. Mama says there is always salmon fresh from the East River. It will be delicious when poached. Or, maybe she'll plank it by splaying it on a thick oak board, and setting it before the open fire to roast until the juices run sweet and buttery. Mama says she'll prepare *clapshot* or tatties and neeps to go with it. I just love the mixture of mashed potatoes and turnips, especially with a large piece of butter melting in the centre.

Friday, May 26, 1786: Tomorrow our guests will arrive. Mama tells me we're even going to have dessert! Scotch *forach*! It's made by stirring fine oatmeal into whipped cream. It's a sweet treat we don't often get to enjoy. Papa says he's going to need extra cream, too, to make some *atholl brose*. He says he has just enough whisky left to mix with honey and cream so he and Mr. Langille can drink a toast.

Saturday, May 27, 1786: They're here, and Marguerite is twelve, exactly my age. She has two brothers to keep my own brothers company, and a younger sister, who is five, that she has to look after. Like me, Marguerite also has to help her mother with the cooking. She said her favourite soup is *kartoffelsuppe*, a mixture of sauerkraut, potatoes, salt pork, and browned flour to thicken it. It's a German thing. Sounds funny to me, but she thinks our *cullen skink* is funnier.

Sunday, May 28, 1786: Marguerite says her favourite fish dish is *house bankin*, sometimes called Dutch mess. It's made of salt cod and pork scraps. We don't have anything like that. One thing we have in common is what we call *hotchpotch* and they call *hodgepodge*. This is a delicious dish of new vegetables, served with cream. But it's too early in the year for that. We'll have skirl in the pan for tomorrow's breakfast. Is there a better way to eat oatmeal?

Monday, May 28, 1786: I am so sad. Marguerite and her family left today to return to Tatamagouche. Our little house seems so empty without the Langilles. I guess there really is something to the Gaelic proverb: Better a small house full than a large house empty.

Marie Nightingale is the author of *Out of Old Nova Scotia Kitchens* (Scribner, New York,1972) and is a regular food columnist for *Saltscape Magazine*.

Anguille à petite-eau (Fire fishing for eel)

Like the Mi'kmaq people of the Maritimes, the Acadians fished for eels in the winter by spearing them through holes in the ice. In the summer, the practice became a dramatic nighttime ritual known as fire fishing.

A bundle of bark and pine wood soaked in turpentine was placed over the bow of the boat. Paddling silently, with flames lighting the water ahead, one fisherman stood by with a trident-like spear called a *fouine*.

Fish drawn to the light would soon find themselves speared, cut in short strips, fried in butter, seasoned with salted herbs and simmered in a skillet for just under an hour.

—Christopher Webb

PARKS CANADA

Food fit for an uprising

by Dorothy Duncan

Upper Canada was only four decades old when the fictional "Ellen" arrived in Toronto in the mid-1830s. The Bird-in-Hand Inn she worked at was a real place at the top of Yonge Street. Her neighbours, the Humberstones and Gibsons, were actual inhabitants. Her fictional letter was written on the eve of what was about to become known as the 1837 Rebellion.

Bird-in-Hand Inn
Newton Brook, Yonge Street
York County, Upper Canada
October 12, 1837

My dear sister Emily:

When I recall the date of my last letter to you I am ashamed that my pen has been idle so long. I hope you will forgive me. Now I am well settled into my new home with our kinsfolk John and Lucy Finch. This inn stands on a very busy road and is held in high esteem by all: newcomers, farmers, and travellers on the stage daily from Toronto (lately York) to Holland Landing, so we never know how many will be at table. Young Fanny, eleven, and her brother Peter, fourteen, from a nearby farm family, are still helping us, else we three could never manage.

We have now what is called Indian summer, with mosquitoes gone and warm pleasant days, and we womenfolk have been busy harvesting potatoes, onions, carrots, parsnips, and turnips, and packing in sand and sawdust, while Peter has been picking and storing our apples and pears in clean, dry straw. We have made many crocks of beet and cucumber pickles, and after we dried some of our apples, pumpkins, and squash, we stored them in stoneware, too. We are fortunate that young Tom Humberstone and his bride, Sarah Wilson from Markham, are near neighbours. He is a potter and learned his craft from his father

Historic dining area in house owned by Archibald M. Campbell in Perth, Ontario, circa 1840.

Bits and bites

• In the winter of 1535-36, explorer Jacques Cartier's 110-man crew lived almost entirely on dried or salted meat. Nearly all developed scurvy, and twenty-five died. The Hurons of the St. Lawrence offered them a cure — a tea made from the twigs and bark of what was likely eastern white cedar. Turns out the concoction contained much-needed vitamin C.

• In the late 1800s, the aboriginal people of the North American Plains stood among the tallest on earth, with men averaging five foot eight inches, according to a study by Ohio State University published in 2001. Researchers credit, in part, a varied diet rich in native plants and wild game.

• During the 1920s, Canada had the highest infant mortality rate among industrialized countries. Part of the reason was a decline in breastfeeding, in favour of the convenience of feeding infants cow's milk. Milk was often obtained from tuberculosis-infected cattle in unsanitary barns, and then stored without refrigeration. The federal government in the 1920s issued its first dietary guidelines, encouraging women to breastfeed.

• In the 1960s, the incidence of rickets among Quebec's infants was said to be the highest in the western world. Rickets — characterized by soft bones, bowlegs and spinal curvatures — is linked to a vitamin D deficiency. Dr. Charles Scriver, of Montreal Children's Hospital, successfully campaigned to have the vitamin added to bottled milk, which is believed to have led to 500 fewer cases per year in Canada.

at York Mills. One night we heard an uproar with horns, pans, and shouts that set our dogs barking. This is called a shivaree and the visitors expect a treat or money to buy one, so Humberstone gave them some coin and they were soon in our barroom buying a round of whisky.

These last few days we have been all aflutter. John learned that a meeting place was needed for the farmers hereabouts to plan what measures could be taken against the Family Compact. Surveyor David Gibson, our neighbour down at Willow Dale, travels much and tells us this is the well-to-do society in town who give all land, positions, and offices to their family and friends, causing much hardship on others. When we heard the farmers were coming, we looked to our supplies and then hurried to mix and set overnight in the dough box an extra batch of bread made with flour from York Mills and yeast from our own hops. In the morning, I fired up both outdoor and indoor ovens and, while they were heating, set young Fanny to churning. And thankfully, she had butter within the hour. She has become skilful at draining off the buttermilk, washing the butter, adding salt, and storing it in tubs and firkins in the larder. Meanwhile, I was kneading down the bread and shaping it into loaves. Lucy made a clever dish called save-all pie, using up all the leftover joints and bones of meat and fowl combined with our vegetables, cut up and put in a great kettle to boil with some flour and herbs.

As soon as my bread was safely placed in the outdoor oven, I made a large basin of pastry for Lucy's pies. We slid the five deep-dish pies into the indoor oven and turned our hands to making a crookneck pudding, a mixture of squash, apples, bread crumbs, milk, beaten eggs, and dried herbs. We sweetened it with maple sugar and baked it for over an hour as the oven was cooling fast. We then made a great cauldron of potato soup and had it bubbling by the time darkness fell and the men began to arrive. Nearly four score arrived and Peter was hard-pressed to find stabling for all.

We dished up great bowls of soup as soon as they sat at table, and then brought out the main dishes. There were flagons of ale and strong lashings of tea for those who had taken the pledge. As soon as they finished eating, we cleared the tables and left them to their discourse, as we could hear their voices long into the night. I know not what will happen next, for those men were all sore perplexed.

Next week Lucy and I will go to town, with Peter driving the small wagon, to bring back some of the supplies we will need for the Christmas baking. I am told there are many travellers at Christmas and the New Year, and if there is a blizzard the inn will be overfull, so we must be prepared. Thankfully, there are always on hand here plenty of spirits to season some dishes when needed. We will visit the best stores on King Street for dried fruit, as well as oranges, lemons, and many spices for our crocks of minced meat for pies, and, of course, our cakes and puddings, too.

I am tired now and must say good night, but I will watch for your next letter with news from our family and friends in Lincolnshire.

Your loving sister,
Ellen

Dorothy Duncan is the author of *Nothing More Comforting: Canada's Heritage Food* (Dundurn Group, Toronto, 2002).

Baking beaver tails

Before Beaver Tails were brushed with butter and bedecked with cinnamon and sugar, the real thing was blistered over an open fire and boiled in a pot of beans.

The beaver-tail bean dish was modified in the nineteenth century by a quick-to-bake dough recipe for those caught camping without a frying pan — and with no actual beaver tail in hand. The dough was shaped into a long, narrow loaf, resembling a beaver's tail, stuck on a stick, and baked over a campfire.

Today, Beaver Tails made of dough and fried in oil have become a favourite at events such as Winterlude, Ottawa's winter festival.

—Christopher Webb

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A bountiful harvest at Fort Vermillion, Alberta, 1922.

Beef & berries on the Prairies

by Cinda Chavich

Moving westward in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, thousands of settlers from Eastern Canada and Eastern Europe looked for new land to farm. By the First World War, the Prairies were largely grain and ranchlands, providing wheat and beef to urban markets via the railroad. As a farmwoman, the fictional "Maude" is involved in the daily activities of her ranch, but spends much of her time in all aspects of food preparation for her family.

High River, Alberta
April 28, 1928

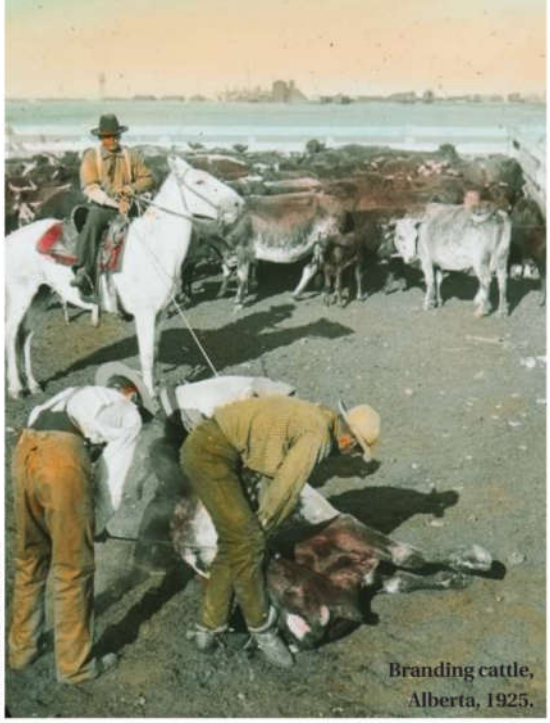
Dear Mother,

It's finally spring on the Prairies, and so soon it will be time to think about planting the garden and branding calves before sending them up into the high summer pastures to graze.

After another long winter, it will be grand to have fresh greens and berries, new potatoes, and crisp carrots for the pot. Our meals of late have been pulled from the dwindling pantry — the last of the bottled and salted meats and preserves, and the few root vegetables still intact, and not sprouting, in the cellar.

We had a good potato crop last fall, put up a fair bit of crabapple jelly and saskatoon berry jam, and we pickled beets and made jars of dills and chow chow in the fall with the cucumbers from the garden. So there are at least a few things left to make our basic meat and potatoes meals here on the ranch a wee bit interesting.

But it will be good to have a crop of fresh fruits and vegetables. April has been warm, and the rhubarb is already sprouting through the snow. We may be able to get down to the river soon to catch some rainbow trout and maybe



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Branding cattle, Alberta, 1925.

even collect a bit of spicy cress, young dandelion greens, or wild onions for a salad. After so many months of mashed roots and rutabagas, those wild greens are always a treat.

It will also be nice to have dry roads and warm weather so that we can spend more time visiting with our neighbours and friends again. Our last big community event — save the holiday skating parties at Christmastime — was the annual fall supper in October at the community hall. As usual, the local ladies outdid themselves, arriving with an array of colourful aspic salads, and specialties like potato scones and raisin pies.

The pantry may be dwindling now, but in the fall it seems like the prairie bounty knows no bounds — we had platters of roasted turkey and smoke-cured ham, mashed potatoes and gravy, squash and carrots, creamy pumpkin pies and apple crisp. With neighbours in the district from Germany and other parts of Europe too, our communal feasts often include homemade sauerkraut, fat pork sausages, pierogi, and cabbage rolls — even flaky strudel and poppyseed rolls — and plenty of chokecherry wine.

The next big gathering will be at the spring branding party. After rounding up the cattle, we meet at the beautiful Gardiner homestead to cut and brand the bawling calves with each rancher's unique mark, and then feast on the crispy calf fries (we call them "prairie oysters" for fun), baked beans, and oatmeal bread cooked on the campfire in a blackened Dutch oven. It always amazes me to see what these cowboy cooks can create from the simple staples hauled from cow camp to cow camp in the back of a chuckwagon. With a barrel of flour and a little lard, some apples or CPR strawberries (a.k.a. prunes), they even bake sweet turnovers (or fried pies, as the cowboys call them), puddings, and doughnuts.

I will soon be planting vegetables in the plot behind the house. We have a large fence around the garden to keep the moose and deer out, but they always seem to find a way through my fortifications. If there is enough rain, we should have juicy strawberries from the patch in late June. Then it will time to head into the coulees to pick wild berries for pies and jams.

You must try to arrange for a visit to Alberta sometime this summer, perhaps in July for the Calgary Stampede. Some of the cowboys from around here have entered the chuckwagon races that they started a couple of years back. It is really quite a sight to see — horses and riders barrelling around the track behind their wagons, then racing to set up a tent and light the camp stove, just like they did out here on the range.

You know, the Canadian Pacific Railway comes directly to Calgary from Toronto, and I understand the food on the train is quite wonderful — served on fine china and CPR silver. You and Father could book a sleeping compartment and travel in style.

As for the train food, I saw a sample menu posted at the station in town. While I am waiting for the first spring lamb with great anticipation here, on the train you can order navarin of lamb, lamb chops, or even exotic lamb curry with chutney. Of course they serve Alberta beef, too, grilled tenderloin steak with spring vegetables and *Bearnaise* sauce. The chefs collect ingredients as they cross the country, so you can even have fried soft-shell crabs with tartar sauce and fresh oysters on the half shell.

I do hope you can come out to see us soon. You will be surprised at how "civilized" life has become here in the West.

Love from us

Maude

Cinda Chavich is the author of *The Wild West Cookbook* (Firefly Books Ltd., Richmond Hill, Ontario, 1998).

Bellybustin' firewater

They were called keg angels, whisky ranchers, and whoop-up cowboys. The notorious whisky peddlers of southern Alberta introduced what the Cree called *iskotawapo*, or firewater to Western Canada. Firewater was a cheap, diluted brandy or whisky often bartered for furs with First Nations people.

At Fort Whoop-Up, near the site of present day Lethbridge, Alberta, one cup of the perilous potion was traded for a dressed buffalo hide.

A stomach-turning recipe still exists in the Glenbow Archives, recorded by pioneer druggist John D. Higinbotham. (Don't try this at home, folks.)

Whoop-Up Recipe

Alcohol	1qt.
Black Strap Chewing Tobacco	1lb.
Jamaica Ginger	1 bottle
Black Molasses	1 quart
Water	enough for the job

Boil and stir until "ripe!"

—Christopher Webb

Crinoline Cargo

The arrival in 1862 of a ship full of single women eased the hearts of British Columbia's lovesick bachelors — and lined the pockets of B.C.'s future premier.

by Terri Hunter

The girls are coming! The girls are coming! They'll be here any day!" So screamed the headlines of Victoria's *British Colonist* in September of 1862. The *Tynemouth*, forever after known as the "bride ship," was on its way. For *Colonist* publisher Amor De Cosmos — a man with a strong sense of the ridiculous who would eventually go on to become British Columbia's second premier — it was a perfect opportunity to attract male readers, not to mention advertisers.

The situation was this: To the horror of the British government, Queen Victoria, and the Anglican Church, the glittering-with-gold valleys of the mighty Fraser River were home to 30,000 people, of whom very few were women, or British, for that matter. Most were single, young American men drawn in by the gold rush. How to make them British? Thus the gift they were about to receive from London — a cargo of sixty young women from Britain.

Organized by the Columbia Emigration Society under the auspices of the Anglican Church, this was not the first

Samuel and Jane Nesbitt of Victoria, circa 1865. Jane Nesbitt, like most of the bride-ship girls, soon became married after her arrival in British Columbia.

B.C. ARCHIVES

Above: Men greatly outnumbered women in 1860s British Columbia. The 1865 painting, *Bar in a Mining Camp, B.C.* by William George Richardson Hind, illustrates the troubling situation of the day.

shipment of brides to the nascent colony. At around the same time the *Tynemouth* was on its way from Britain, The *Seaman's Bride*, a ship from Australia with about twenty women on board destined for Victoria, docked at San Francisco. "And what did the young Yankees do?" De Cosmos complained in the *Colonist*. "Alas! They captured the affections of the girls. … The vessel came on to this port (Victoria) without even a petticoat aboard to delight the eyes and cheer the palpitating hearts of the Victorians."

Centre: Amor De Cosmos. The photo was taken between 1872 and 1874.

B.C. ARCHIVES

De Cosmos's interest in the bride ship may not have been simply commercial. The Nova-Scotia-born future politician, whose original name was William Alexander Smith, had a keen interest in unifying what were then two British Crown colonies — one on Vancouver Island and one on mainland British Columbia — as well as the other British North American colonies, and joining them into a single nation. At the time, Americans dominated the West Coast colonies, and some saw it as inevitable that the United States would eventually take over the region. De Cosmos, a smart, dapper, if eccentric man, who stood out for always being well-dressed, perhaps perceived the introduction of the British women as one way of turning back that tide.

Vancouver Island's stricken lonely hearts were in an uproar when the California bachelors raided the *Seaman's Bride*. Undaunted, De Cosmos tried to keep the fires burning until the next bride ship was expected to arrive. To titillate his male readers, the editor ran sentimental love poems and such lurid stories as, "A Mysterious Queen of Fashion," stirring the minds of prospective suitors to the glories awaiting them. "Trying on a Hoop Skirt" had a blushing young male clerk outwitted by a beautiful lady desiring to try on a fashionable underskirt. The salacious tale ended with the clerk discovering that instead of retiring to "rearrange her toilette," the lady had made off with the merchandise.

De Cosmos also regaled his male readers with advice on choosing a bride. Beware, he wrote, "the girl with a romantic confidence in her Cinderella-like destiny," who didn't appreciate "steady, good-looking, industrious young men." Shouldn't she instead "anticipate marriage with one in the humbler walk of life?" No doubt his humbler readers agreed.

De Cosmos finally had some good news to report when, on September 11, 1862, the *Colonist* announced:

> The *Tynemouth's* Invoice of Young Ladies
>
> The screw steamer *Tynemouth*, from London, with sixty young ladies aboard, should be here in a few days, and bachelors both young and old must prepare to give fitting reception. A general holiday should be proclaimed; all the bunting waved from flagstaffs; salutes fired from Beacon Hill; clean shirts and suits of good clothes brought into requisition, and every preparation made to give this precious "invoice" a warm welcome. We are sorry to say that the *Tynemouth* will stop at San Francisco on her way up. … The Immigration Board should send an agent to San Francisco to prevent "desertions" while the Tynemouth lies at that port.

The men of the colony were abuzz with anticipation. Was it true? Were they really coming? On September 17, De Cosmos's *Colonist* passed on more hot news from San Francisco:

> The *Tynemouth* at San Francisco
>
> How many hearts will beat with pleasure as this paragraph reaches their eyes, we do not dare think; but we are sure that pleasurable emotions will pervade every bachelor heart in the "great" metropolis when we state that the good steamer *Tynemouth*, with sixty select bundles of crinoline, arrived at San Francisco on the 10th … and was to sail in a few days for this port with her precious freight — that is, if the Yankees don't steal their affections. The local editor of the *San Francisco Herald* must himself have been smitten with the fair damsels, to judge from the following: "'Colonization of British Columbia'… their rosy cheeks and *embonpoint* [full-figured bodies] show that they will be valuable accessions to the Colony."

Next morning's *Colonist* reported: "The ship had left San Francisco on the 12th… and is now fully due here." And, De Cosmos noted in a column, "She was very fast — steaming at fifteen miles an hour." He added, "It may be consoling to those of our citizens who have expressed a fear that the young women might be stolen by the Californians, that they are under the charge of an agent, whose duty it is to see that they do not leave the vessel."

De Cosmos, however, had been fooled. The ship had in fact arrived the previous night and was anchored a few kilometres away in Esquimalt Harbour.

On September 20, the *Colonist* made the official announcement:

> Arrival of the *Tynemouth*
>
> This fine, iron steamship … cast anchor in Esquimalt harbour at 8 o'clock [the] night before last. As a matter of course, we went aboard the steamer yesterday morning and had a good look at the lady passengers. They are mostly cleanly, well-built, pretty-looking young women — ages varying from fourteen to an uncertain figure; a few are young widows who have seen better days. Most appear to have been well raised and generally they seem a superior lot to the

MCCORD MUSEUM

Whatever became of the bride-ship girls?

Only half of the sixty young women aboard the *Tynemouth* have been traced by historians, and, as could be expected in the raucous frontier days of British Columbia, their lives varied enormously.

Louisa Townsend spoke for many when she said, years later, that she "happily took to husband, housework, and babies with no regrets." She and her sister brought Victoria its first piano and first sewing machine.

Besides farming with their husbands and children, many of the women became midwives and teachers to the new communities they helped found. It is said of *Tynemouth* passenger Isabel Robb that she never lost a mother or child in all her years of midwifery in the Comox Valley.

Mrs. Thomas George Askey, née Isabel Julia Curtis

B.C. ARCHIVES

Mary Macdonald, with a widowed mother and three sisters to support, is credited with inspiring Victoria's love of music. She was much in demand to sing at parties and weddings, and, at one time or another, she played the Sunday organ for most of Victoria's hastily erected churches. Years later she married Peter Leech, a one-time gold miner who was by then Victoria's respectable city engineer.

Jane Saunders fulfilled her dream of riches, parlaying her late husband's biscuit company into a business empire with the help of her seven children. This led local wags to call their home the Cracker Castle.

The beautiful Isabel Curtis was married at fifteen and whisked away to a cabin on the dark forested shores of what is now the town of Chemainus on Vancouver Island. Her arranged marriage eventually left her a young widow with several children and at the mercy of those who wanted her land. Eventually, she settled happily near Jane Nesbitt, a fellow bride-ship girl, in Victoria. Like many of the girls, she was helped over the years by the Royal Navy and the citizens of Victoria, who always took care of the bride-ship girls who had won their hearts. — **T.H.**

women usually met with on emigrant vessels. Taken altogether, we are highly pleased with the appearance of the "invoice," and believe that they will give a good account of themselves in whatever station of life they may be called to fill.

Bedlam erupted at the news of the ship's arrival. Anything that floated was hired to get eager young swains out to the ship. Others, said the *Colonist* "…toiled along primitive roads to the port, hacking miles through the heat and dust … arrayed in their best, down to polished shoes and delicately perfumed handkerchiefs."

For the next few days, De Cosmos gleefully reported on the antics. Hoping to inspect the ship's "lovely freight," some respectable notables "hove in sight." Despite their "protestations of honorable intentions," the newspaper reported, the boatload found the gangplank pulled up against them, and were forced to return to shore "like baffled birds of prey." Chortled De Cosmos in a column: "A large number of citizens visited Esquimalt … and were generally ordered off and returned from their fruitless errand with heavy hearts."

Girls fifteen years and up would be available as brides and housed at the military barracks until a suitor was found.

It had not, however, been fruitless for the newspaper. Eager advertisers bought space to promote products for the lovelorn. A large ad for toiletries suggested, among other delights, "Essence Jockey Club" for men, a product called "Kiss Quick," and *de rigueur* castor oil pomade for gentlemen's hair. Other advertisers bypassed the courtship stage altogether and went directly to flogging crockery and blankets.

Also in the ads was the announcement of a gala regatta for the girls, to be followed in coming weeks by ads for whale boat races, horse races, and other delights to share with a new sweetie.

Interest was so keen that the Royal Marines were excused from their regular duty of guarding the Pacific Ocean to escort the girls ashore. It was a startling welcome through a noisy, overheated, and not always respectful throng of what De Cosmos called "breeches-wearing bipeds." There were friendly flirtations, lewd comments, and jokes as rough as some of their owners.

The sea-weary women were led in rows toward the legislative building, where tubs of warm water with soap were set up in front of the building for the women to wash their clothes. Many had been deprived of such luxuries for months and a very public scrubbing took place.

After the ceremonies, a women's committee divided the bride-ship women into three groups. The very young were placed in homes as servants until they were old enough to marry. Girls fifteen years and up would be available as brides and housed at the military barracks until a suitor was found. The ship's older passengers would also stay in the barracks until employment was found for them. The girls lived under tight twenty-four-hour surveillance in the aging military complex, and no one, except immigration committee members, was admitted.

Still, this high level of security wasn't completely effective. Some days after the women's arrival, the *Colonist* reported a "SHOCKING DEPRAVITY" — apparently two clergymen and a naval officer had made "a melancholy discovery." They had come across one of the girls *in the act*! She was talking through the barracks fence — *to a man*!

In his newspaper, De Cosmos warned: "What will become of a young lady who exhibits such extreme depravity … who would allow … converse with that most dangerous of all animals — *a young man*. …To guard against a repetition … we respectfully recommend a file of marines drawn from among the oldest men … with especial reference to their ugliness, be stationed around the barracks in future with strict instructions to bayonet every young man who may have the audacity to approach."

Eventually, the women found husbands, or work, or both, and their presence had a significant impact. They helped found communities all over British Columbia, and many families today can trace their ancestry back to the bride ship *Tynemouth*.

The *Tynemouth* was not the only bride ship to arrive in Victoria. The Columbia Emigration Society also sent out the *Robert Lowe* the following spring. After that, ships were no longer chartered, but women were still given assisted passage. The emigration of young women from Britain was taken over by the Salvation Army in the late 1800s and by the YWCA after that. The practice of sponsoring British women to come to the West Coast did not end until before the Second World War.

Terri Hunter's family came to Vancouver Island in 1851. She has a master's degree in anthropology and is considering doing a Ph.D. on the bride ships. She writes and lectures in Victoria B.C.

Et Cetera

Voyages of Hope: The Saga of the Bride-Ships by Peter Johnson, BC Books, Heritage Distribution, Surrey, British Columbia, 2002. (Part fiction).

In *The Beaver*: "Different Drummer" (about Amor De Cosmos) by Norm and Carol Hall. October/November 2006.
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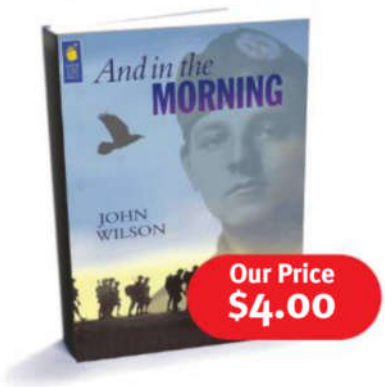

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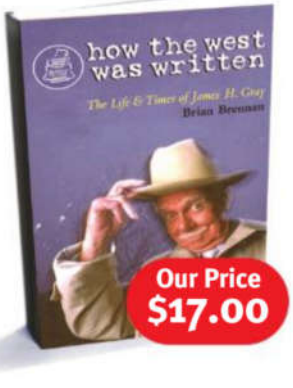

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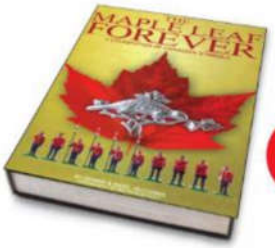

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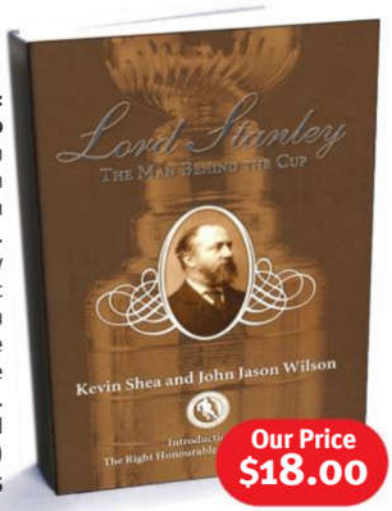

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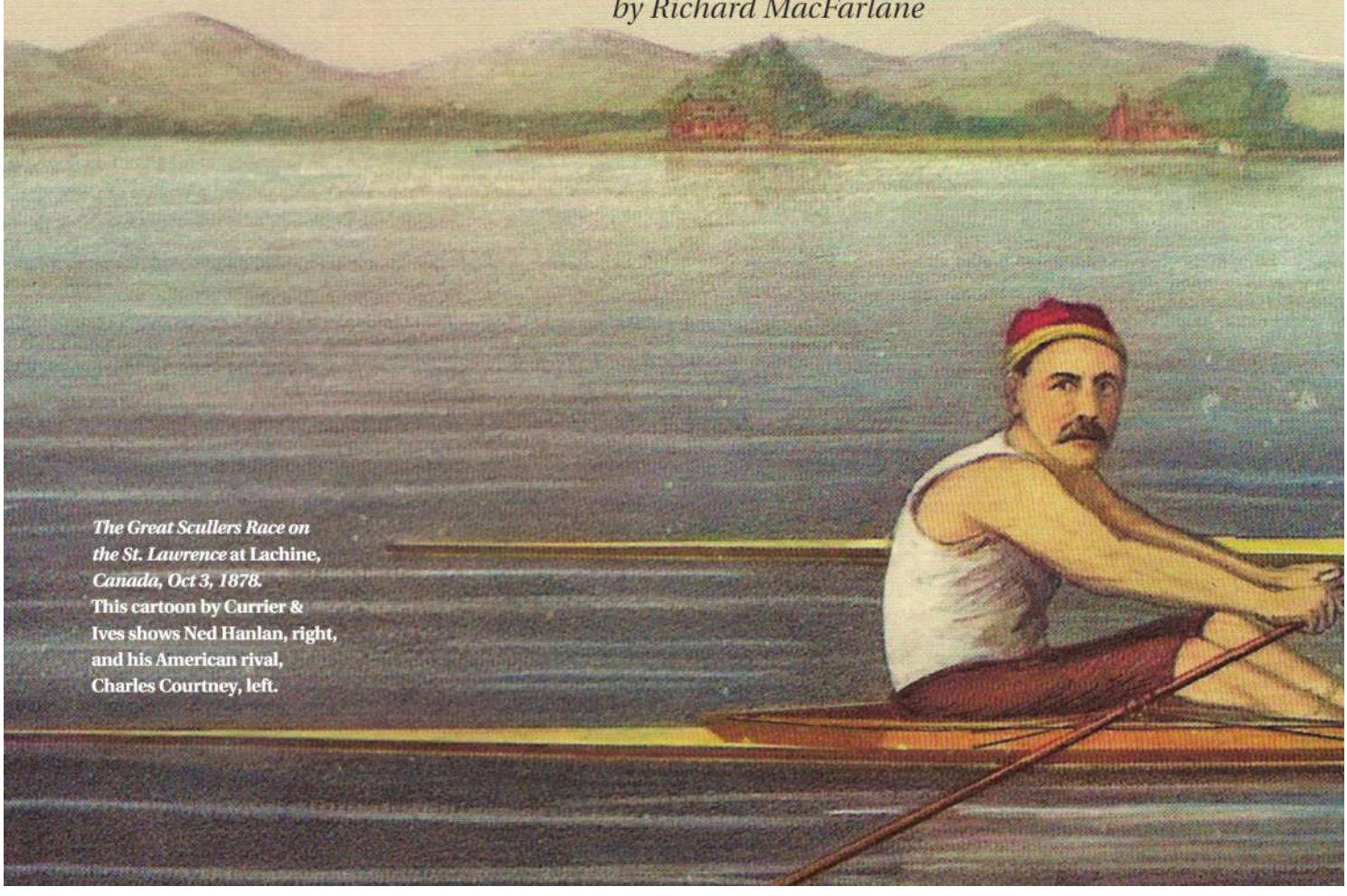
Row for Glory

Canada's Ned Hanlan stayed one stroke ahead of controversy to become the world's fastest man on water.

by Richard MacFarlane



The Great Scullers Race on the St. Lawrence* at Lachine, *Canada, Oct 3, 1878. **This cartoon by Currier & Ives shows Ned Hanlan, right, and his American rival, Charles Courtney, left.**

Ned Hanlan sat in his single scull, muscles tensed, anxiously awaiting the starter's signal. It was September 1876 and the wiry, upstart little rower was about to begin his meteoric rise to international fame. The Canadian sculler had entered the prestigious Philadelphia Centennial Regatta as the underdog. Sure, he had won a few races up north. But this was the United States — and this event was a very big deal. The race was part of the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition — a world's fair held to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the United States — and the Americans were showcasing their best, including their top professional single scullers.

So when young Ned, the twenty-one-year-old son of Irish immigrants, came down from the Toronto Islands to compete against America's finest, many laughed at his ambition. But jaws soon dropped when Hanlan — rowing like "a small steam engine hissing through the water," according to Toronto's *Globe* — breezed past his brawnier American competitors to capture the five-kilometre course on the Schuylkill River in a record time of twenty-one minutes, nine-and-a-half seconds. Then, to add insult to injury, it was two *Canadians* — Hanlan and Alex Brayley of Saint John, New Brunswick — who ended up battling each other in the finals, effectively shutting the Americans out of their own competition.

Meanwhile, on the amateur side, a man named Charles Courtney, from Union Springs, New York, emerged as the single sculls champion. Destined to become America's next great one — he turned professional two years later — Courtney would go on to become one of Hanlan's more controversial rivals in years to come.

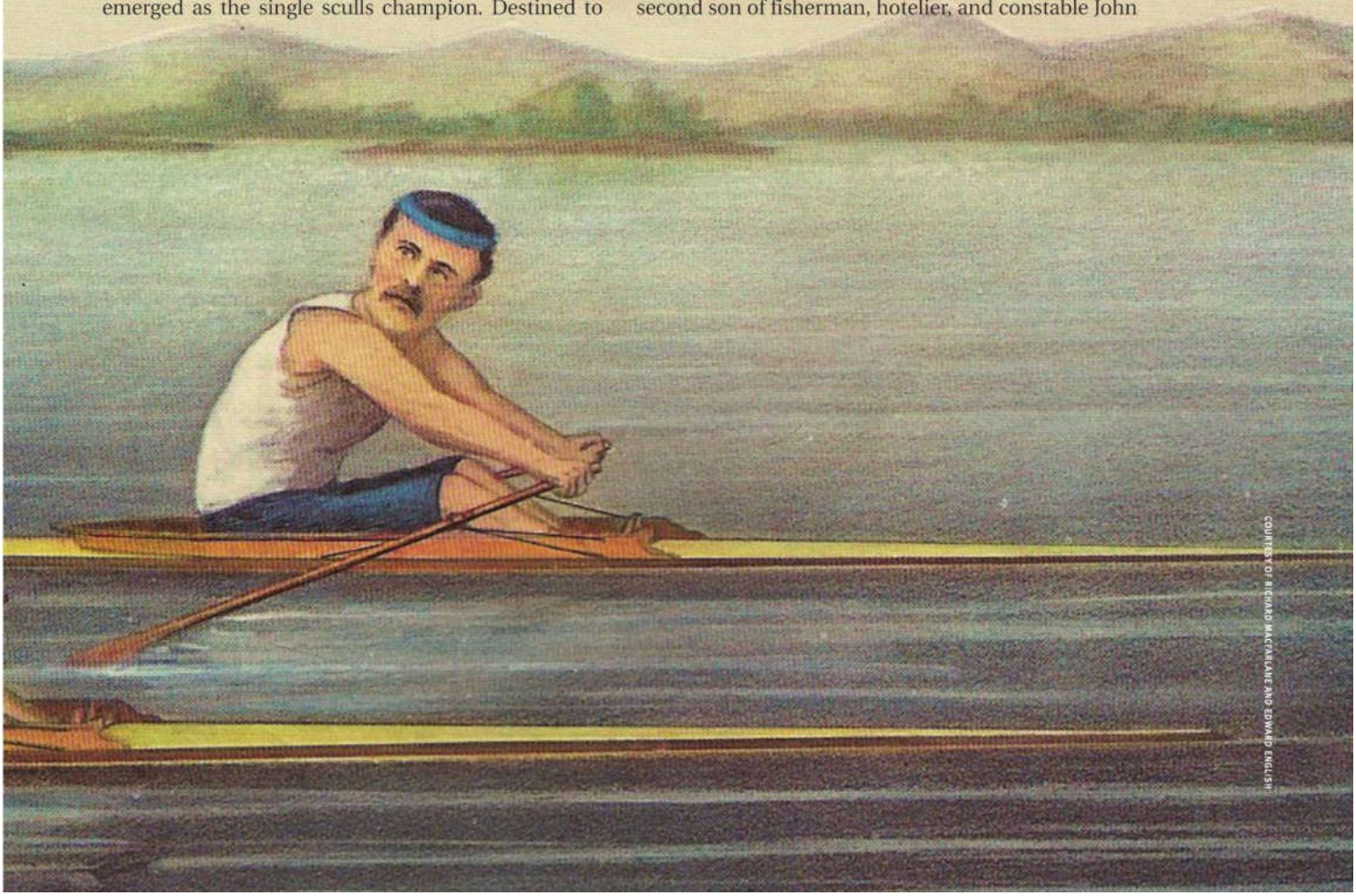
Hanlan's victory at America's centennial celebrations gave Canada its first international sports hero. He would go on to dominate his sport, becoming a household name in places like Paris, London, and New York.

Despite his achievements, it's likely that many Canadians are not aware of Ned Hanlan.

Hanlan's triumphant return from Philadelphia caused a sensation in his hometown of Toronto. Scenes of patriotic pandemonium greeted the champion as he approached the waterfront aboard the SS *City of Toronto*. Martial bands played patriotic tunes and tugboats blasted their horns as thousands of people crowded the dock, shouting: "Hurrah for Ned! Hurrah, Hurrah! You did it, boy!" The line of watercraft awaiting his arrival was almost two kilometres long; it was said the harbour was so thick with boats, a person could step from one craft to another and never get their feet wet. A torchlight procession followed, with thousands of fans marching up Yonge Street.

"Had Hanlan been a victorious general returning with a brilliant military record, 'the hero of a hundred fights,' he could not have received a greater or more hearty reception," proclaimed an 1876 *Globe* newspaper editorial.

Born on July 12, 1855, Edward "Ned" Hanlan was the second son of fisherman, hotelier, and constable John



COURTESY OF RICHARD MACFARLANE AND EDWARD ENGLISH

COURTESY OF RICHARD MACFARLANE AND EDWARD ENGLISH

Above: Portrait of Ned Hanlan, published in *The Canadian Illustrated News*, July 26, 1879.

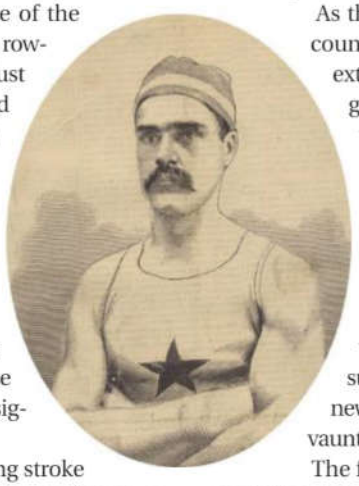
Hanlan and his wife, Mary Gibbs. The family lived at the western tip of the Toronto Islands — a place that would one day be renamed Hanlan's Point in the rower's honour. Young Ned grew up watching men scull on Lake Ontario and took to boating as a child, rowing to the mainland every day to attend school.

Known as the "Boy in Blue," from his racing colours, Hanlan grew up during the golden age of Canadian professional single scullers.

In 1873, Hanlan won his first singles event, the Championship of Toronto Bay. He went on to win a string of victories on the local and national levels.

People soon began taking notice of the man dubbed the "little Canuck." Most rowers were big men, but Hanlan stood just under five feet, nine inches, and weighed no more than 150 pounds. Yet he could row circles around his much larger competitors.

Centre: Controversy surrounded Charles E. Courtney's races with Ned Hanlan.



A key to his success was the way he mastered what was then an innovation in rowing — the sliding seat. The sliding seat, which most of Hanlan's competitors also used, allowed for a greater angle in the water and the use of much more leg drive, resulting in significantly faster race times.

Hanlan developed a powerful, long stroke through the water. He trained almost thirteen kilometres per day and seldom raced at more than thirty-two strokes a minute, while his opponents rowed at a stroke rate approaching forty. To the chagrin of his competitors, he rowed with little apparent sign of fatigue or exertion.

His early victories on Toronto Bay persuaded a group of local businessmen that Hanlan was worth supporting. By 1876, they had established "The Hanlan Club," which arranged matches, drew up contracts, and negotiated prize money. Their efforts helped the young Hanlan focus on rowing — and steered him away from the youthful indiscretions he had gotten himself into.

Local newspapers described Hanlan as "unreserved, gracious, kindly, clean, humorous, honest and sporting… with those two sterling qualities: friendliness and cleanliness of mind."

However, he wasn't a saint. There were temptations on the island; it's known, for instance, that the young Hanlan sold liquor without a permit to guests outside Hanlan's Hotel, his father's establishment. (A story is told of one incident in which Hanlan, with the Toronto constabulary in hot pursuit, ran out the hotel door, jumped into a skiff, and rowed furiously until he caught a steamer headed for the U.S.)

Hanlan was a natural showboat. When leading a race, he would often slow down, pausing to chat with the crowds along the shore. Sometimes he would feign collapse, only to restart and take the lead again. These pranks made Hanlan a crowd favourite, but angered many of his competitors.

Spectators at the time bet heavily on the races. Hanlan's antics were good for business, because they kept bettors guessing. In some of his biggest races, the amount gambled was the equivalent of what today would be worth between $10 million and $20 million.

The rivalry between Hanlan and the famed American rower Charles Courtney in particular fuelled rumours and scandal. The two had first crossed paths at the Philadelphia Centennial Regatta of 1876, although they did not compete against each other at that event.

As the top single scullers of their respective countries, their rivalry was heightened by the extensive coverage newspapers of the day gave to professional rowing. Race stories were often filled with jingoism and chauvinistic flair, and peppered with gossip and innuendo that fired public interest to a fever pitch in the weeks and days leading up to competitions.

In Hanlan and Courtney, the press had found its perfect story: The plucky little Canadian, dubbed "Mighty Ned," versus the powerful American eagle. It was the newly minted Dominion of Canada versus the vaunted United States of America.

The first race between Hanlan and Courtney took place in Lachine, Quebec, in 1878 — the year Courtney turned professional.

It was a tight race until they neared the finish line of the eight-kilometre course, which was crowded with private

COURTESY OF RICHARD MACFARLANE AND EDWARD ENGLISH

boats and barges filled with spectators. With only five hundred metres left, barges suddenly drifted between the oarsmen and the finish line, forcing both scullers to pause. Hanlan won by only one-and-a-quarter lengths. Could Courtney have won if the barges had not interfered?

The crowd was angry and newspaper reporters were divided in their views. The *New York Times* claimed that Courtney was bribed $4,000 to lose the race. "Nonsense," screamed Toronto's *Globe*, with a large block headline: "Great American Eagle Screeches Fraud." Rumours and accusations went back and forth between the handlers of each sculler, the spectators, and the press. Hanlan himself wrote a letter to the editor in the *Globe*, backing his backers.

In a telegraph to the *Montreal Herald*, dated October 4, 1878, Hanlan had this to say about Courtney and accusations of race fixing and bribery: "Mr. Courtney is a very honourable man. …There is no reason why we should not row a square and honest race. Once and for all, let this be the last of it, if there has been any arrangement to insure my winning, I know nothing of it, and I feel confident that Courtney rowed to win if he could."

On October 16, 1879, they staged a rematch known as "the Hop Bitters Race." Held on Lake Chautauqua in Mayville, New York, it attracted 100,000 spectators to a town with a population of just a thousand. More than one hundred reporters flocked there to cover the event, which was meant to settle the issue, once and for all.

Then, on race day, it was discovered that someone had sawed Courtney's boat in half. Newspapers called it a heinous act, one of the worst sports crimes in history. Officials asked Courtney to race in another boat, but he refused, forcing officials to cancel the race. Hanlan decided to row the course alone. Meanwhile, furious gamblers wanted their money back. It was said that Hanlan labelled Courtney a coward, while Courtney accused Hanlan's entourage of plotting to destroy his boat. Allegations emerged that $2,000 was promised to Courtney, win or lose, and $3,000 was promised to Hanlan if he allowed Courtney to win. The race was not re-rowed. As for the mystery of the sabotaged boat, the prevailing view was that Courtney's handlers were responsible.

The now-bitter archrivals would go on to clash in a third race in May 1880, on the Potomac River in Washington, in front of more than 100,000 delirious spectators. The year before, Hanlan had achieved new heights of fame, winning the English Championship by eleven lengths on the Tyne River in England. Now Hanlan was back in America, ready to settle his old score against Courtney. The event was such a sensation that the U.S. Congress recessed so politicians could place their bets and watch the race.

With a staggered start, Courtney grabbed the lead, but he was soon overtaken by Hanlan. The American sculler began rowing erratically, his boat running down the lane markers. Courtney then started back down the course too soon, without having reached the turning stake. Hanlan overtook the American with ease. Courtney later claimed he had suffered heat stroke. In dismay, American reporters pocketed their stubby pencils and shuffled home.

In Hanlan and Courtney, the press had found its perfect story: The plucky little Canadian, dubbed "Mighty Ned," versus the powerful American eagle.

One more race would make Hanlan world champion.

On November 15, 1880, the Boy in Blue found himself on the Thames River in England, the centre of the rowing universe. Hanlan's opponent was Edward Trickett, a powerful six-foot-five-inch Australian.

Before the race, Trickett's trainers had publicly mocked Hanlan, infuriating the Canadian. Hanlan in turn vowed to embarrass his opponent — and he was as good as his word.

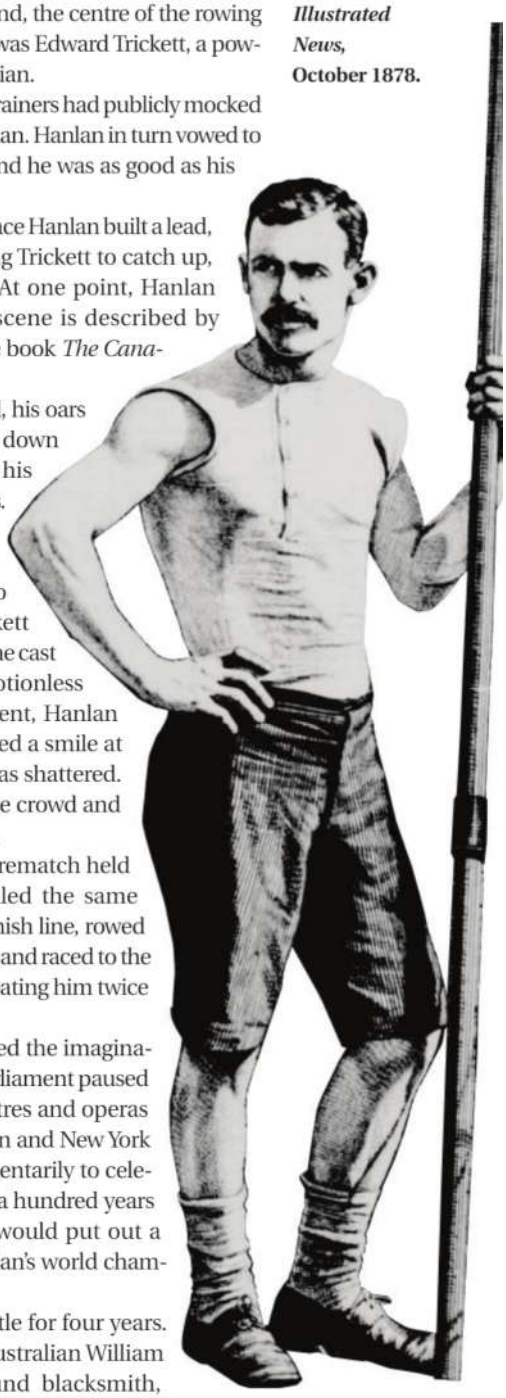
Several times during the race Hanlan built a lead, then stopped rowing, allowing Trickett to catch up, only to sprint ahead again. At one point, Hanlan appeared to collapse. The scene is described by writer Frank Cosentino in the book *The Canadians —Ned Hanlan*:

> "He had slumped forward, his oars drifting his boat slowing down under the burden of his weight and drag of the oars. Trickett turned to see his competitor and, filled with new hope, began to pull harder…. As Trickett pulled even with Hanlan, he cast a glance over to the motionless challenger. At that moment, Hanlan raised his head and flashed a smile at the champion. Trickett was shattered. Hanlan gave a wave to the crowd and pulled away once more….

Trickett fared worse in a rematch held two years later. Hanlan pulled the same stunts; he even crossed the finish line, rowed back to pull alongside Trickett, and raced to the finish line again, effectively beating him twice in the same race.

Hanlan's victories captured the imagination of the world. Canada's Parliament paused to praise his successes. Theatres and operas stopped, and even the London and New York stock exchanges halted momentarily to celebrate his achievements. And a hundred years later, in 1980, Canada Post would put out a stamp commemorating Hanlan's world championship achievement.

Hanlan held the world title for four years. Then, on August 16, 1884, Australian William Beach, a two-hundred-pound blacksmith,



Ned Hanlan, *Canadian Illustrated News*, October 1878.

COURTESY OF RICHARD MACFARLANE AND EDWARD ENGLISH

defeated the twenty-nine-year-old Hanlan on the Paramatta River in Sydney, Australia. In the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Bruce Kidd writes: "Hanlan's friends put the blame for the loss on a second bout with typhoid, the debilitating effects of almost eight months of foreign travel, and a near collision during the race with a chartered steamer, but the muscular blacksmith was an exceptional opponent. Unlike Hanlan's other challengers, Beach had mastered the use of the sliding seat; he also outweighed the defending champion by fifty pounds. Hanlan stayed another seven months for a rematch, but Beach beat him then, and again in 1887."

In 1894, Hanlan retired from competitive rowing. He went on to coach and run a hotel, also serving briefly as an outspoken alderman for the Toronto Islands. Hanlan, who had married Margaret Gordon Sutherland in 1877, had six daughters and three sons, one of whom died in infancy. On January 4, 1908, Ned Hanlan, the greatest of the world's single scullers, died of pneumonia. He was fifty-two. His funeral cortege, with about ten thousand mourners, stretched for about a kilometre along Toronto's King Street.

Today, a symbol of his legacy stands at Hanlan's Point, near his childhood home on the Toronto Islands. It's a bronze statue of Hanlan, created by noted Canadian sculptor Emanuel Hahn. At its dedication in 1926, Joseph E. Thompson, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature, declared: "If the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, then I can safely say that Vimy Ridge was won on the rowing courses and stadia of Canada."

Hanlan won some three hundred races in his lifetime, losing only about six. He achieved world record times over long distances that have yet to be broken. But more than that, he gave Canadians a reason to be proud.

At the height of his fame, some American newspapers tried to adopt Hanlan as one of their own. Hanlan was quick to set the record straight with trademark Canadian politeness: "There's no harm in them calling me an American," he told the press on one occasion. "But I am not an American in the sense that they want to have it. I was born in Canada and I am a Canadian."

It's been one hundred years since Hanlan's death. His legacy was expressed by J. P. Fitzgerald of the Toronto *Evening Telegram*, who wrote on September 3, 1926, that Hanlan "…dazzled the world as has never been done before, or since, and never will be again by any single figure."

Richard MacFarlane is a writer, a thirty-five-year rowing veteran, and a member of the Hanlan Boat Club in Toronto. The author would like to thank Edward "Ned" Hanlan, grandson of Ned Hanlan, for his research contribution.

Et Cetera

Ned Hanlan by Frank Cosentino, Fitzhenry & Whiteside, Toronto, 1978.

Rowing by Silken Laumann, Calvin Wharton, Michael Cullen, and Peter King, Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited, Toronto, 1994.

The Boy in Blue, a movie starring Nicolas Cage, directed by Charles Jarrott. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Toronto, 1986.

Ned Hanlan and his sliding-seat scull, date unknown.

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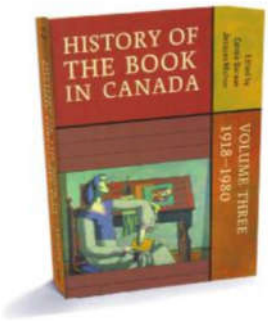
SLIPPERY SEATS

Ned Hanlan was known as the "father of the sliding seat." While he didn't invent the contraption, he is said to have perfected its use in rowing. The knowledge that one could row faster and with more ease if the seat moved was known as far back as ancient Greece. Some early racers tried to gain the advantage by greasing the seat and wearing leather pants to reduce friction. John Babcock of the Nassau Boat Club of New York is credited with inventing the first working mechanical version in 1857. It had a run of 30 centimetres and was mounted on metal rails using wooden runners. He admitted it was difficult to master: "The tendency for a beginner is to slide too much and at the wrong time — to use it improperly is easy and pleasant, while to use it properly is difficult and fatiguing."

By the 1870s, the sliding seat was in widespread use among competitive rowers in Europe as well as North America. However, traditional rowing with a fixed seat did not completely disappear — fixed-seat rowing competitions are still held.



ONE FOR THE BOOKS

History of the Book in Canada: Volume Three: 1918–1980
Edited by Carole Gerson and Jacques Michon
University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2007
696 pp., illus., $85 hardcover

In 1997, under the sponsorship of the Bibliographical Society of Canada, a group of diverse scholars held a founding conference at the National Library of Canada with the ambitious aim of producing a national history of the book. The history of the book had come of age as a new and exciting discipline, and national histories were being written in many English-speaking countries.

Patricia Fleming and Yvan Lamonde, the general editors for the Canadian effort, envisaged a collaborative project that would encompass three large composite volumes, each to be published separately in French and English, beginning with the oral communication of the aboriginal peoples prior to the era of New France and ending with the first referendum on Quebec's sovereignty and the domination of print culture globally by multinational publishing companies. The culminating volume of *History of the Book in Canada* is ample testimony to the resounding success of this project, demonstrating that the history of writing, reading, publishing, and book dissemination in Canada merits its own story in spite of linguistic solitudes, provincial and regional barriers, and the lack of authors of the stature of Shakespeare or Cervantes.

Volume Three of *History of the Book in Canada* consists of seven parts divided into eighteen chapters. Each part deals with a broad theme, such as the cultural influence of books and print in Canadian society, authorship, publishing in various forms and for different audiences, distribution, production, and reading. Chapters contain essays of varying lengths, punctuated by short, individual case studies. For those who are more comfortable with a linear approach, the editors have added a chronology, a list of sources cited, an abundance of black-and-white illustrations, charts, maps, and tables, biographical information on more than 100 contributors, and a comprehensive index.

The volume concludes with a coda in which editors Carole Gerson and Jacques Michon briefly touch on developments

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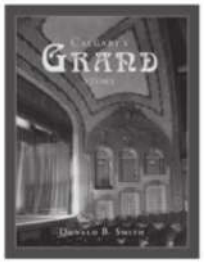

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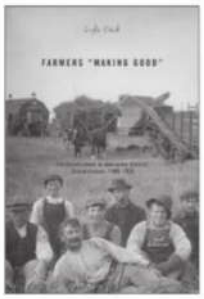

FARMERS "MAKING GOOD": THE DEVELOPMENT OF ABERNETHY DISTRICT, SASKATCHEWAN, 1880-1920, 2nd Edition
by Lyle Dick

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since 1980 — a period marked by new technologies, the end of traditional censorship, big bookstore chains, the resurgence of foreign ownership in the book trade, growing multiculturalism, and international recognition of Canadian writers.

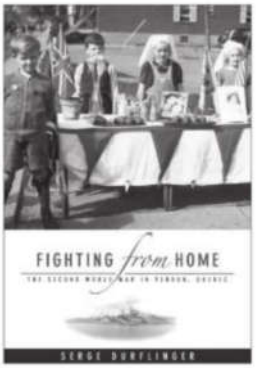
On the one hand, given the wide scope of the contents and the richness of statistical data, this volume of *History of the Book in Canada* gives the appearance of a stylish, comprehensive reference tool. There are well-crafted essays on trade and regional publishing, booksellers organizations, graphic design, books in advertising, children's literature, and academic libraries, for example. The case studies provide illuminating snapshots on a range of interesting topics and individuals: Leslie McFarlane's pseudonymous authorship, Harlequin Books, and French-Canadian classics published by Fides, among many others.

On the other hand, many essays, such as A.B. McKillop's "Imprinting the Nation in Words," are conceptual in nature, discussing vehicles of communication and contrary impulses in Canadian values. Brendan Frederick R. Edwards' "Reading on the 'Rez'" breaks new ground in the analysis of reading and literacy among aboriginal peoples. Some essays juxtapose French and English experiences. Points of comparison in the two major linguistic cultures are strained in Clarence Karr's "Autobiographies of Reading: L.M. Montgomery and Marcel Lavallé," however, where the reading habits of a highly literate author are contrasted with those of a man in rural Quebec who spent most of his adult life in prison.

On the whole, the essays in Volume Three of *History of the Book in Canada* are succinctly written, readable, and well-researched. The scholarship is erudite without being oppressively highbrow, although Robert Darnton's communication circuit and other theoretical models of book history loom large in the background. There are solid essays by George L. Parker, Mary Vipond, and Frank Davey on branch-plant publishing, mass media, and economics and the writer, respectively. The volume does not replace but complements other works, such as Roy MacSkimming's *The Perilous Trade: Book Publishing in Canada 1946–2006* and Michon's *Histoire de l'édition littéraire au XX^e siècle.*

The completion of *History of the Book in Canada* is a testament to collegial scholarship. It compares favourably with other grand projects such as the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* and the *Historical Atlas of Canada.*

Reviewed by **Carl Spadoni**, who is the Research Collections Librarian at McMaster University Library. He is a lover of books.



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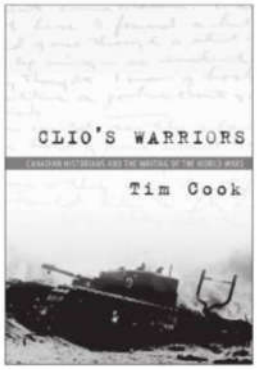

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MORE BOOKS

1867 and all the rest of it:
A short, thin Canadian history book
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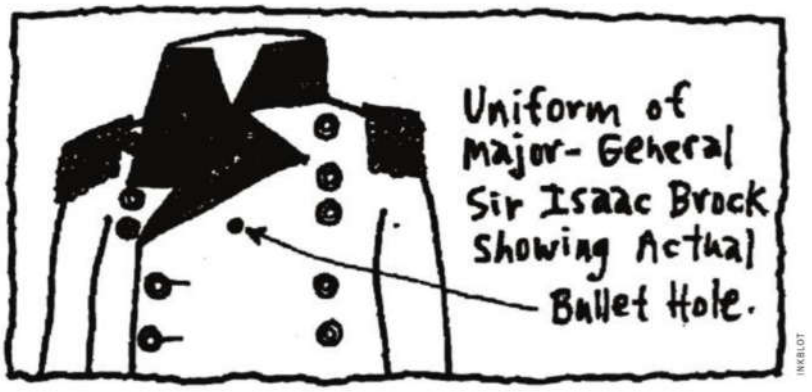
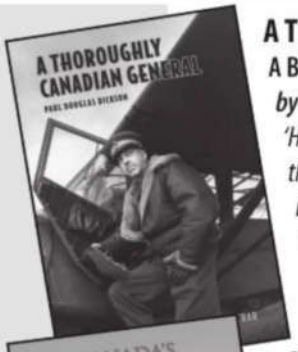


In the history of history books, *1867 and all the rest of it* may go down as one of the most entertaining. Tapping on the typewriter in his basement and sketching with his ink pen, Geoffrey Corfield created an amusing look at how Canadians got to 1867 and survived 140 years of Confederation.

Most engaging are Corfield's delightful illustrations depicting the history of Canada. He presents artifacts as diverse as the head of Sir Francis Bond Head or the collar styles of famous explorers, and includes just about every hat that might have played a role in Canada's development.

No one will be able to claim to have a thorough knowledge of Canadian history after reading *1867 and all the rest of it*. Corfield leaves that task to the short, thick and tall, thin history books that already grace the shelves of libraries across the land. Instead, he has summed up — with all its inherent fuzziness — the general impression many Canadians have of their country's past.

If you find *1867* a bit strange, your assessment would be right. But in his journey through our past, Corfield presents a humorous challenge that will entertain, and often enlighten, even the most staunch history enthusiast. — **Joel Ralph**



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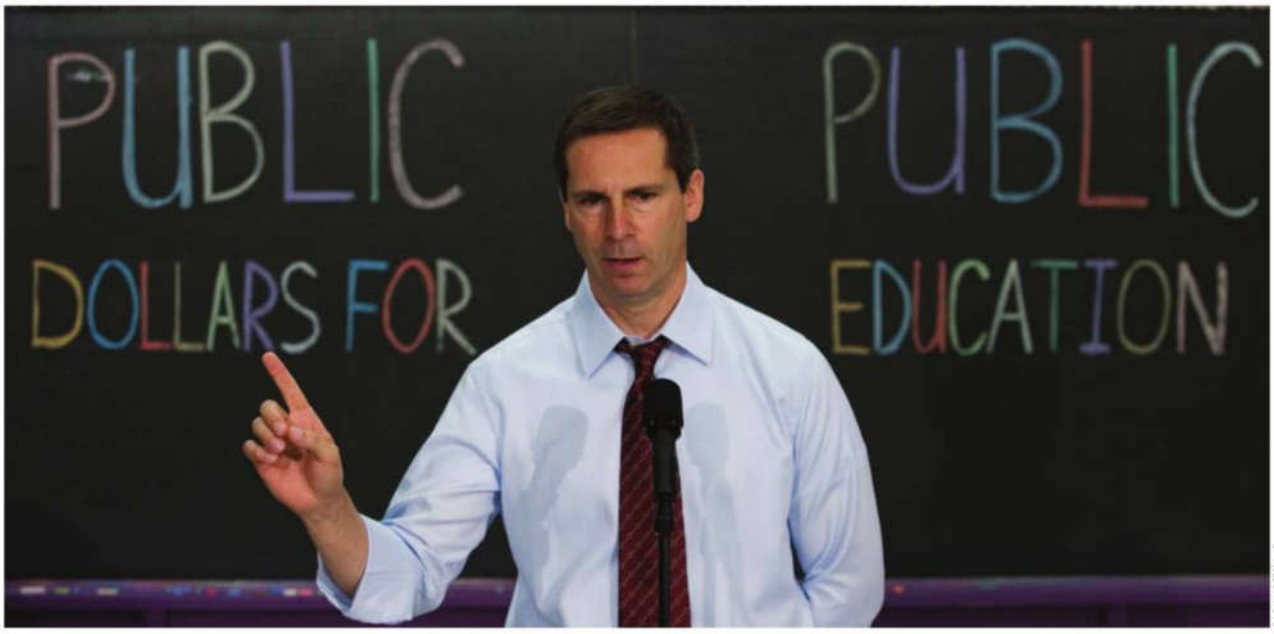
Christopher Moore

Faith, Education, and the Blame Game

History isn't at fault for Ontario's separate-schools conundrum.



CP PRESS PHOTO

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty speaks to the media about funding for education at the beginning of the fall 2007 provincial election campaign. The question of funding for separate schools dominated the election, which was won by McGuinty's Liberals.

Canadians take the separation of church and state as a given. We defend religion as a human right, but define it as a personal and private matter. We associate tolerance for all with the non-sectarian status of all our public institutions.

Yet, in the fall of 2007, Ontario's provincial election was dominated by questions about religion and schools that are older than the country. Should Ontario:

• Empower every religious grouping (or, indeed, every group of whatever kind) to maintain and control its own schools with public funding, no matter how much splintering and sectarianism ensued?

• Pursue the full rigour of the principle of equality by trying to abolish the whole existing separate-school system?

• Or maintain the status quo in which, despite our equality-focused non-sectarian twenty-first-century consensus, just one religious group maintains and controls tax-supported separate schools?

All the choices on offer seemed grim. But on such choices governments were made and political careers ended in Ontario in 2007.

Some observers concluded that the only thing to do was to blame history. "Whatever the conditions were in 1867, when the agreement with the Catholic schools was forged, it is not the situation in 2007 as we face Ontario today," said Alan Borovoy, General Counsel of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. Borovoy was not the only one to suggest it's not our fault; that Ontario is being held hostage by nineteenth-century politicians, probably those damned Fathers of Confederation, who just don't understand modern times.

After reading these complaints about how the past has handcuffed us, I went back to read a little about Egerton Ryerson, the architect of educational policy in English Canada from the 1840s to the 1870s.

Ryerson never advocated secular education. He was convinced schools must teach religion and morality. But he also said: "By religion and morality, I do not mean sectarianism in any form but the general system of truth and morals taught in the Holy Scriptures." Ryerson really believed Catholics, Anglican, Methodists, and all others could read the same Bible and absorb

the same lessons in the common public schools.

In the 1850s, that just was not on. At the time there was a great surge of Catholic militancy, the Church triumphant spreading out in the world. And it confronted an equally militant Protestantism determined to roll back "papal aggression." Many Protestants no more wanted their children in public schools that Catholics might dominate, than Catholics wanted (or were welcome) in Protestant-majority public schools.

Some Ontarians continued to insist on one big system. "Common schools for all, or no common schools," said George Brown, founder of the *Globe* and a Father of Confederation. But many Catholics — and some High Anglicans and others, too — wanted their own schools inculcating their own faiths.

In principle, Egerton Ryerson wished for common schools. But in practice, he conceded that minorities (Protestants in some places, Catholics in others) needed separate schools to be "protected from insult." He hoped that one day those separate schools would wither away, "not by force of legislative enactment but under the influence of increasingly enlightened and enlarged views."

In short, mid-nineteenth-century Canada was in the same three-cornered mess that Ontario displays today. How did the politicians of that day deal with it?

As Leonard Tilley — a Father of Confederation who also served as premier of New Brunswick — said to John A. Macdonald in another context: "There is no use crying peace when there is no peace." The politicians of Quebec and Ontario made a deal in the 1850s, and they sustained that deal in the constitutional settlement of 1867. Catholics in Ontario, Protestants in Quebec: each minority got the right to run its own schools.

Even then, the veteran politician and deal-maker John Sandfield Macdonald warned against constitutionalizing the deal. "We are sowing the seeds from which will arise in the end a serious conflict," he warned, arguing that minorities should trust the majorities for justice.

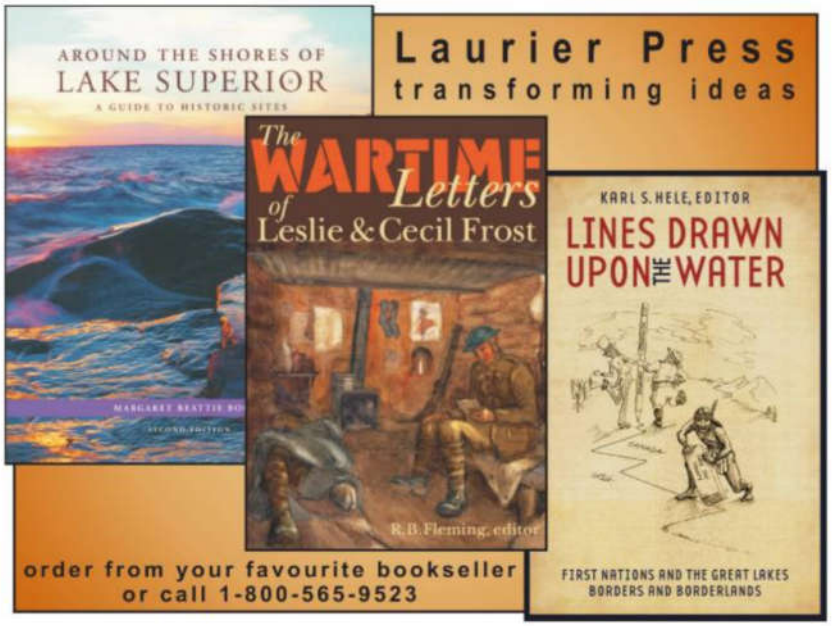
In the end, the constitutional protection the nineteenth century gave to minority schools was hardly a straightjacket. Should a province move to abrogate minority school rights, the minority could seek protection from the federal government. But if there was agreement between the province and the federal government, the minority schools protection could be removed. Such a change would not trigger a mini-Meech Lake: no dragging in ten provinces, nor debating the distinctness of Quebec or Senate reform.

Indeed, both Quebec (in 1997) and Newfoundland (in 1998) reached agreements with the federal government and abolished constitutional protection for separate religious schools. With a broad consensus for change having been built in those provinces, the constitutional change proceeded quietly and smoothly. Now some voices in Ontario advocate the same for their province.

The obstacle, frankly, is not the Constitution; it's the facts on the ground. Close to a third of Ontario students attend separate schools. There are costs to running parallel systems, but the cost — political as well as financial — of abolishing, against the will of those who rely on it, a system that seems to do a good job of educating so many of Ontario's students, would also be immense. But that's hardly to be blamed on history's dead hand. Finding consensus remains a challenge to be faced in Ontario's present.

Egerton Ryerson in the 1850s decided to tolerate what he could not change. He had a lot of other good thoughts, too. He said education should be "as common as water and free as air." When a childless businessman asked if he was being taxed "to educate all the brats in the neighbourhood," Ryerson said he absolutely was, "and in order to do so, it is proposed to compel selfish rich men to do what they ought to do voluntarily." An educated populace, he wrote, "is the best security for a good government and constitutional liberty."

Christopher Moore comments in every issue of *The Beaver*.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Woodstock's ornately carved tower, designed by David Ewart and built in 1899.

Timeless Towers

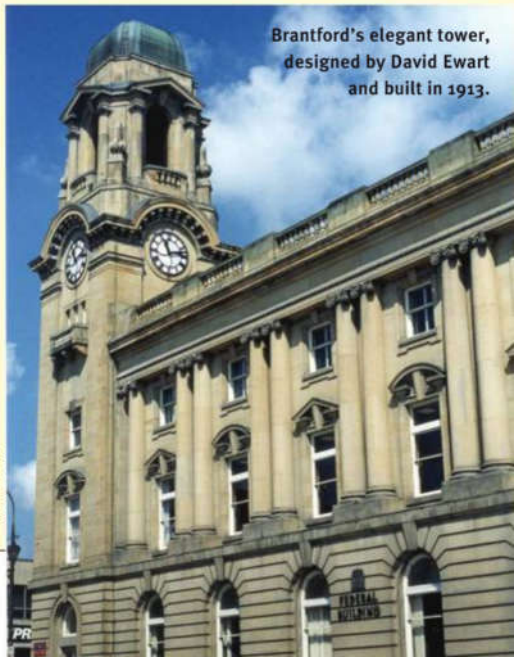
Marc Boileau tours the historic timepieces of Ontario's Tower Triangle.

Our most monumental federal architecture may be in Ottawa, but other Ontario towns can also boast similar treasures. Before Ottawa's Peace Tower was completed in 1927, hundreds of classic "Timepiece Towers" were constructed across Canada. They were a source of immense pride to their communities and took substantial resources from a fledgling country. They mirrored our local optimism for the nation and solidified the political fortunes of several national ministers.

Interested travelers can visit what I call the "Tower Triangle" in Southwestern Ontario and study the design styles of three prominent federal chief architects from the early years of Confederation: Sir Thomas Fuller, his son Thomas W. Fuller, and David Ewart. Sadly, none of the elegant structures from the first chief architect, Thomas Seaton Scott, have survived.

Begin a tour in Tower Town: Galt (now part of Cambridge), Ontario. While many early federal towers have been destroyed, Galt has two; they are one block, and a generation apart, in the old town's core. The older structure, built in 1885, has housed two former restaurants. Here you can glimpse the style of Sir Thomas Fuller, Canada's second chief architect (1881-96), and original Parliament tower designer. The building is reputed to be haunted, with occupants reporting the spiritual presence of Emily, a young postal worker whose lifeless body was found hanging in the bell tower. The body of the postmaster, her supposed lover, was found shortly after.

The use of contrasting colours and textures in the stone, the steep mansard roof, and the Romanesque arches are all typical of Fuller. Working mostly during an economic depression, he rarely incor-



Brantford's elegant tower, designed by David Ewart and built in 1913.

MARC BOILEAU

porated the block tower and turret clock into his original designs. This is the oldest (1885) survivor. (The clock wasn't purchased until 1914 from Smith & Sons in the United Kingdom, one of the main suppliers of the clock mechanisms.)

A short walk north, a working post office designed by Fuller's son, Thomas W. Fuller (chief architect from 1927-36), graces the streetscape. From him we see another special example of architectural prowess. This grand tower features intricate stonework that is rarely found in other examples of the younger Fuller's work. Both structures were clearly influenced by Galt's striking architectural milieu. Most of the historical buildings, including the nearby clock-towered town hall, (1857) still survive, providing an uncommon heritage streetscape.

In nearby Brantford, you can visit one of David Ewart's later projects (1913). Ewart, Canada's third chief architect (1897-1914), was the most prolific and eclectic federal tower designer. The six-storey tower is capped by a domed turret, and married to a Baroque post office structure, his only Ontario example.

En route to Woodstock, you can stop at Burford, to see the town's austere brick postal building, another later Ewart effort (1914).

It is a stark contrast to Ewart's 1899 stone building in Woodstock — presently the city hall — which is easily spotted on the streetscape. You must look closely amid the ornate stone capital carvings and horizontal doorway lintels to also spy the words "Customs and Inland Revenue," a clue to the original federal life of the building. It is Ewart's earliest and most elegant surviving federal design. His clock tower roof was a model for many later structures, such as those in Aylmer and Waterloo, but none had such detailed stonework.

Conclude your visit in the communities of Fergus and nearby Elora, to see their twin towers (1911 and 1912 respectively). The arched "eyebrow" clock dormer in the towers is the most common Ewart tower variant, built throughout Canada. In most, ordinary brick was traded for the rich stone textures seen here.

Clock towers became unfashionable in architecture by World War II.

Despite their grandeur, half of our federal legacy has already been demolished.

The surviving buildings in the Tower Triangle offer a unique taste of this disappearing early architecture.

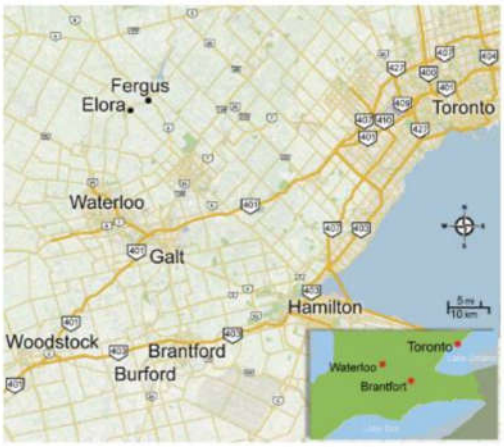
Marc Boileau is the author of *Towers of Time: Ontario* (2006).

MARC BOILEAU

This tower, designed by Sir Thomas Fuller and built in Galt in 1885, features Romanesque arches.

MARC BOILEAU

If you go...



MICHEL ROULEAU

Total travelling distance for the tour described is about 158 kilometres and could be completed in a day, but is best completed in a weekend. Access the area via Highway 401 and 403. From Cambridge, it is only twenty-six kilometres to Brantford on Highway 24. Highway 53 connects to Burford and Highway 2 to Woodstock (thirty-five kilometres). Using Highways 401 and 6, travel ninety-three kilometres to Elora and nearby Fergus for the twin towers that complete the tour. For area tourism information, see the Midwestern Ontario Guide at visitor.on.ca.

Tower locations

Cambridge
• Old Galt Post Office
12 1/2 Water St. South
• Cambridge Main
Postal Station
33 Water St. North
T: 1-800-749-7560
(Cambridge Tourism)
W: cambridgetourism.com
E: visit@cambridge-tourism.com

Woodstock
Woodstock
City Hall
(Old Post Office)
500 Dundas St.
T: (519) 537-8411
(Woodstock Museum)
W: city.woodstock.on.ca
(City of Woodstock);
tourismoxford.ca

Elora/Fergus
• Elora Post Office
150 Geddes St.
(at MacDonald Square)
• Fergus Station Main
(Postal Station)
299 St. Andrews St. West,
T: (877) 242-6353
(Centre Wellington
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Your Story

Flight of the Thunderbird

Bev Lundahl searches for the totem that graced HMCS *Quesnel* during World War II.

HMCS *Quesnel*

A wide-eyed thunderbird with a red, pointed beak and tufted head bravely faced the salty wind from the crow's nest of HMCS *Quesnel*, the corvette that my father served on during World War II.

The *Quesnel* was commissioned at Esquimalt, British Columbia, in 1941. To distinguish it as a West Coast ship, this totem pole was its emblem. I often wondered: "Did an aboriginal person give the crew this lucky talisman?"

My dad, who boarded the *Quesnel* in 1944 in Halifax, did not know the origin of the totem pole or its final resting place. During a two-year search, I found several *Quesnel* veterans and learned a less romantic story. The thunderbird had been "obtained" at Alert Bay, B.C. Apparently, some rowdy sailors had raced to the ship, totem pole in hand, with the RCMP in pursuit, and had then hidden it away. They later repaired the totem and hoisted it into the crow's nest.

A mythological bird of First Nation legends, the thunderbird has wings that beat like the wind and eyes that flash like lightning — fitting imagery for a ship sailing in stormy weather in stormy times. One legend says thunderbirds fly out to the ocean, snatch up whales and take them to the mountains to eat. The *Quesnel*, too, had ocean predators to subdue — German submarines. Fighting in the North Atlantic required all the help one could get, and my father said the sailors drew comfort from the thunderbird during those dark years.

The thunderbird could bridge two worlds — the spiritual and the earthly — and life did hang in the balance for these men. They would often return from convoy duty in the North Atlantic with their ship encrusted with several centimetres of ice. The ice put the guns out of commission and left the crew vulnerable. The men may have felt they were not far from the other world.

While the thunderbird may have boosted the morale of the sailors during the Battle of the Atlantic, I learned during my visit to Alert Bay in 2006 that it was a different story for the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation.

During a two-year correspondence with Andrea Sanborn, director of the U'Mista Cultural Centre there, I had received a photograph of a thunderbird grave marker that had been stolen in the 1940s from the 'Namgis Burial Grounds. Descendants of the person whose grave this had marked were still living at Alert Bay. I soon decided to make the trip to this remote village.

It took all day from Vancouver, and two ferries, to reach Alert Bay, on Cormorant Island off the northern edge of Vancouver Island. As we approached the town over the water, I wondered: "What will they be like? What kind of place will it be?" Then I saw a brightly coloured, carved face peering at us from the middle of the crossbar of an elaborate gateway, below which hung a

welcome sign: 'NAMGIS FIRST NATION GILAKAS'LA WELCOME.

I did a double take when, descending from the ferry, I saw the burial grounds before me dotted with totem poles. I knew I was at the right place. At the lodge that evening, I read with dismay an article about the residential school that had closed in 1973. The faded brick school looked out of place among the totem poles and other First Nation art and, though it was no longer in use, its aura dominated the area.

Inside the cultural centre, I viewed potlatch masks that were confiscated by the government in the 1920s and not returned for over half a century. The government, following its policy of assimilation, had banned the potlatch — a ceremony of feasting and gift-giving. As Sanborn said, these ceremonial masks hold the spirits of their ancestors.

It was against the backdrop of these conditions that the thunderbird disappeared from the 'Namgis Burial Ground in the 1940s. Residents here felt both anger and sadness over its loss.

U'mista means "the return of something important." The U'mista Cultural Centre's mission is to repatriate artifacts that have found their way to other parts of the world.

I often wonder what happened to the thunderbird on the *Quesnel*. The ship was paid off (decommissioned) in 1945. Was the thunderbird still in the mast? Will it ever find its way back to Alert Bay and be another U'mista? Some Kwakwaka'wakw legends tell of transformation symbolized through masks and totems. Can this story — one of two groups of people who both loved a thunderbird — be changed into one with a happy ending for both? The return of the thunderbird could be a symbolic gesture in the slow transformation towards harmony between the original people of this country and those that followed.

Bev Lundahl of Regina, Saskatchewan, is a genealogist — a pastime that has taken her to some interesting places.

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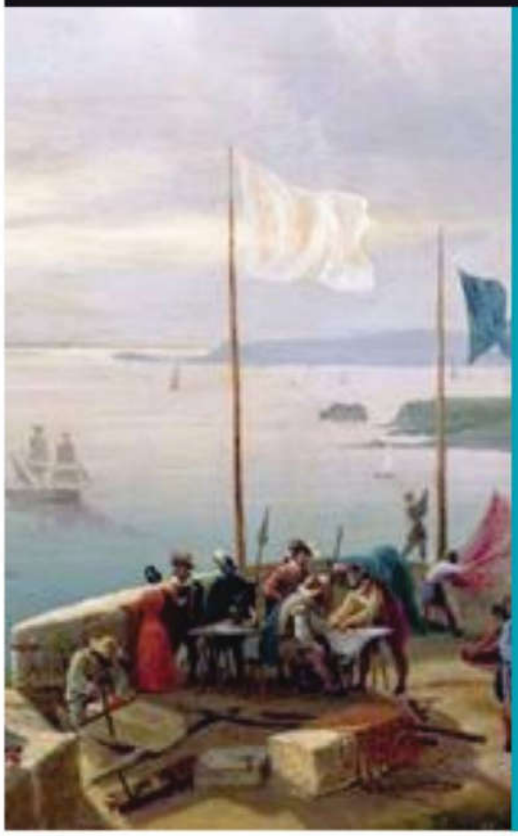

Le Vrai Champlain
Explorer, inspiration, father of New France: Samuel de Champlain's achievements are legendary. But who is the man behind the myth?
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The clash for Quebec would decide the future of a continent.
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Founded in 1994 to popularize Canadian history, the work of Canada's National History Society includes: **The Beaver, Kayak,** the **Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History** to honour the country's best history teachers, and the **Pierre Berton Award** to recognize those who have brought history to a wider audience.

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The Beaver was founded in 1920 by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose commitment to the History Society and its programs continues today through the ***Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation***.

Modern-day history heroes

by Nicole Harris

On November 2, six extraordinary classroom teachers were recognized by Her Excellency, the Governor General of Canada, the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, OC, PC, at Rideau Hall. Many thanks to TD Bank Financial Group and Library and Archives Canada, for once again generously supporting the awards program and the efforts of the History Society to extend its reach and impact beyond the festivities in Ottawa.

The fourteenth annual Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Canadian History demonstrate that exemplary history teaching can happen in any classroom. This year's laureates are:

YVES PROVENCHER

Rose Fine-Meyer

Rose Fine-Meyer

HUMBERSIDE COLLEGIATE, TORONTO, ONTARIO

Imagine having a warehouse of historical information at your fingertips. You might think of it as a Facebook for local history. Remarkably, that's what Grade 12 students at Humberside Collegiate created through their individual and group research. Their teacher, Rose Fine-Meyer, created a hands-on course for students that enabled them to study their community and local history, while archiving their results. The students' archival system grew to include local records of Humberside's First World War veterans and was supplemented with research from original military files in Ottawa. Titled "Archives and Local History," Fine-Meyer's senior–level high school course has been accepted as part of the Ontario curriculum.

YVES PROVENCHER

Susan Haynes

HAVERGAL COLLEGE,
TORONTO, ONTARIO

In Susan Haynes' Grade 7 class, some days seem just like Halloween. In the third row sits the first Anglican Bishop of Toronto. Just to the left of him is a famous French nun, known as the "Mother of Montreal." For Haynes, it's vital that students understand that history must be explored from many perspectives: our three founding peoples, both genders, different socio–economic groups, leaders and followers.

Haynes encourages her students to walk in the shoes of their favourite historical figures, by creating passports and donning historical costumes. Titled, "Passport to the Past," this assignment, among others from her "Who tells the story?" lesson plan, has vaulted Haynes into the national spotlight.

JEFF BASSETT

Rhonda Draper

GLENMORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
KELOWNA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

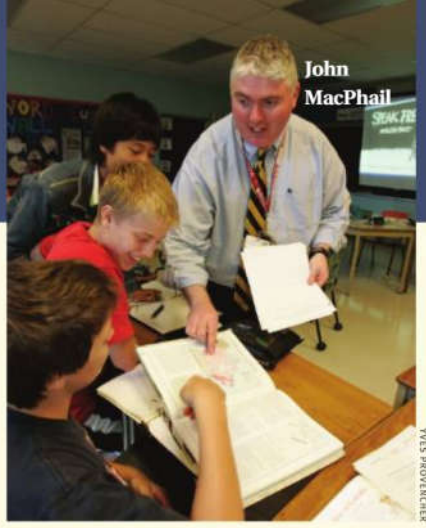
Rhonda Draper believes in the power of song to unite people. Recently, this Grades 3-6 teacher at Glenmore Elementary School encouraged her students to discover history through folk songs. Students strummed and hummed their way through recordings written from the perspectives of cowboys, campers and political leaders. Then, historical references were plucked out and examined in detail. Draper's students even created their own songs to showcase what they had learned about history and music.

John MacPhail

ST. DOMINIC SCHOOL,
OAKVILLE, ONTARIO

The students in John MacPhail's Grade 7 history class at St. Dominic School not only study the past, they relive it. By recreating the inner chambers of the Upper Canada Court House, MacPhail enabled his students to travel 170 years back in time to stage a mock trial of William Lyon Mackenzie.

It's a good thing that MacPhail's class didn't conduct Mackenzie's trial more than a century ago. MacPhail's students sentenced Mackenzie to two years in prison — six months more than the 18-month sentence he actually received in the United States for violating the neutrality laws between the U.S. and Britain after his failed rebellion in 1837. Fortunately, the death penalty was forsaken in both cases, otherwise Mackenzie's grandson, William Lyon Mackenzie King, might never have lived to become Canada's longest-serving prime minister.



YVES PROVENCHER

Monique Martin

GEORGES VANIER
CATHOLIC SCHOOL,
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

It's not every day one can boast about riding the bus with legends like John Diefenbaker and Chief Whitecap, but in Saskatoon, their memorable lives are getting a lot of mileage. By combining history with art, Grade 7-8 teacher Monique Martin encouraged her students to create history-themed advertisements for 22 bus shelters and 21 bus interiors. Titled "Stops with History," the project selected bus stops throughout Saskatoon for students to research. Then they created posters to highlight the historical connections

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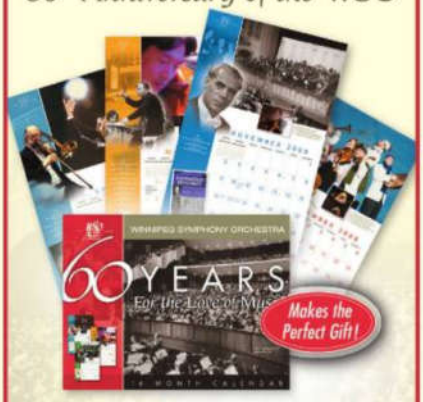

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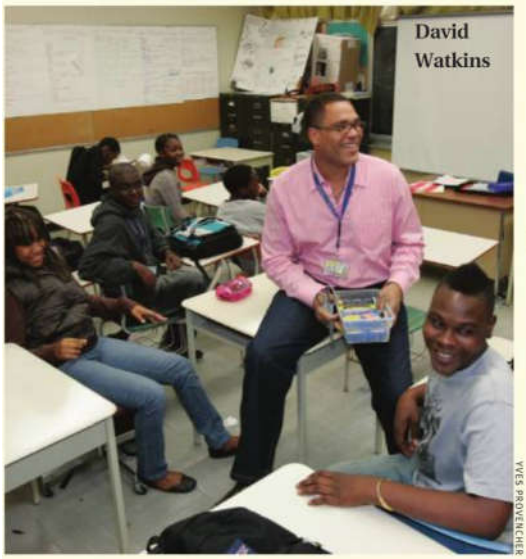
between the designated transit locations and the city's key figures and events from the past. The project helped educate both the students and the community about Saskatoon's colourful history.


David Watkins

YVES BOURCIER

David Watkins

WESTON COLLEGIATE, TORONTO, ONTARIO

David Watkins is a teacher at Weston Collegiate in Toronto. Over the past 18 years, he's seen his share of children in need of guidance and direction, including many from the African-Canadian community. That got Watkins pondering an important question: Why aren't there more black role models in society?

So Watkins decided to transform himself into a modern-day black superhero. He wrote and drew his own comic featuring a hero who happens to be black, and encouraged his Grade 11 students to create their own black crime-fighting superheroes — ones that would champion the values of the African-Canadian community. They also visited regional sites relevant to the history of African Canadians, and founded a three-day conference with other students from Windsor, Toronto and Detroit, to build a greater pride and understanding of black history in their communities.

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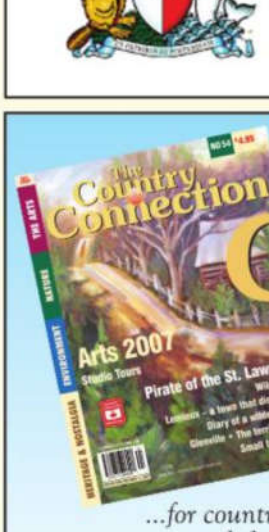

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Album

Tom Schmidt, who submitted this photograph, is the son of Ronald Schmidt. He lives in Winnipeg.

Greeting Grey Owl

When this photo was taken in 1932, Grey Owl, second from right, was known throughout Canada and Britain as an eccentric aboriginal naturalist who toured in full Ojibwa garb promoting his books and films. Like his readers and fans, the men in this photo were oblivious to Grey Owl's true identity as English-born immigrant Archie Belaney. Ronald Schmidt, third from the left, was taking a break from his studies to play in an orchestra in Prince Albert National Park in Saskatchewan. Out on a day trip on Ajawaan Lake, Schmidt and the other subjects in the photo — a Mountie and a crew from the National Film Board — decided to pay Grey Owl a visit at his lakeside cabin built for him by Parks Canada. Most of Grey Owl's conservation work revolved around the beaver, and his cabin even had an entrance through the floor for his two pet beavers, Rawhide and Jelly Roll. Schmidt was lucky enough to meet Jelly Roll, with Grey Owl's permission. Grey Owl's partner, Anahereo, however, would have none of it. She refused to live with the rodents and had her own cabin, seen through the trees, on a hill. Before departing the next day, the Mountie dressed Schmidt in an oversized scarlet tunic, boots and hat. While the visitors laughed, Grey Owl shook his head as if to say: "What has become of the RCMP?" In 2000, Ronald Schmidt's son made the trip to Ajawaan Lake and stood in the same spot his father had 68 years earlier. Ronald Schmidt passed away in 2005 at the age of 91.

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Or email your submission to album@thebeaver.ca. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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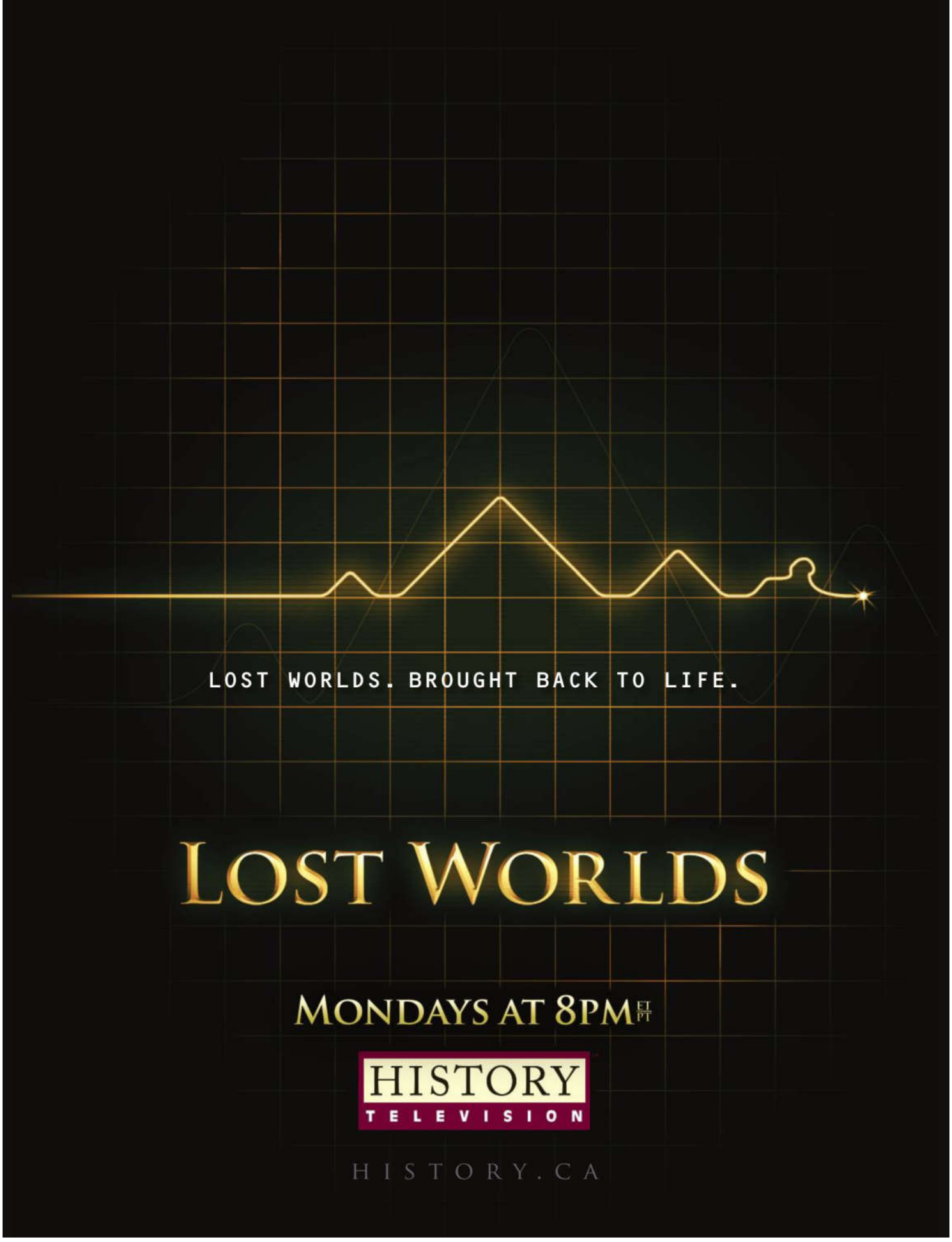
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